

FILM FANTASY! TV TERROR! VIDEO VIDEOS! A QUALITY MAGAZINE

HORROR

HALLS OF

MAD MAX
THE DAY AFTER...

ISSUE 29 70p • \$2.00
BI-MONTHLY

STATS
SHOCK

THE POETRY OF EVIL
VINCENT PRICE
MUTANT!

HAMMER '68
"THE NIGHT
HOLDS TERROR"

--told in pictures





Editors of magazines in general and fantasy film magazines in particular aim to have one feature or editorial direction that sets them apart from the others on the newsstand. Some succeed, among them **Fantasy** for genre film coverage, **Fantasy Magazine** (not) for longevity, **Confrontation** for in-depth feature reports and **Cinefantasy** for detailed special efforts reviewing.

I think we can now, in all modesty, add **Hells of Horror** to that select list. Not only did editor/masthead publisher Don Skene originate the idea of comic strip adaptations of films and then turned yet another monster mag into an award-winning success but, in our second run, we were lucky or perceptive enough to come up with the idea of a fantasy video listing. The response from you has been (to put it mildly) astonishing!

Letters have poured into our office praising the idea, offering help or enclosing mammoth lists of data. This is obviously a timely project and, in response to your enthusiasm, we have scheduled our companion magazine, **Video Fantasy**, for quarterly publication beginning this autumn after its premier issue last month. We hope that you will continue to support the idea of video listings and video-related articles now that we have separated them from **Hell**.

And, referring to a moment in that amount of work you sent us for the listing, may we like this chance to thank publicly the following: **Bill Walker**, **Niel Roberts**, **Maurice Pinky**, **Stefan Jaworsky**, **John Fulkard**, **Gary Reynolds**, **Ian Adams**, **Glen Davies**, **J. Breville**, **P. Morris**, **J. Hantwerker**, **Paul Higgins**, **Nigel Reynolds**, **Colin Bayless**, **K. Jones**, **Dave Madock**, **N. Conner**, **Nigel Burton**, **K. Jones**, **Graham Todd**, **Dave R. Rindin**, **Merese Shepherd**, **Gary Dawson**, **Julius Deane**, **Alan Shepherd**, **Stephen Lewis**, **P. Sutcliffe**, **Dave Merrick**, **Bill Walker**, **Stephen Kivlahan**, **Dave Carson** and "The Core House". Heroes all!

As I was saying, our first great strength was the comic strip adaptation and your letters have certainly voted in favor of its continuation. Sadly, that is just not possible in its present form. Other publishers have moved into the same field and, with greater resources at their disposal, have changed the rules of the game. Marvel Comics and DC Comics can always outbid us for material and, more to the point, carry the financial burden when they choose a film like *Annie* or *Rock and Roll*.

So, in our typically imaginative way, we have come up with a plan that should appeal to all the comic fans and prove to the good Hammer fans who make up such a large portion of our audience. Next issue we will be presenting a Shondor strip by long time **Hell** editor and **Warner** scripter Steve Moore and to just John Stokes, who did our recent **Endless of Dracula** strip. This is the first of whole series in which we will attempt to solve the various continuity problems that exist between Hammer films but will also make you are not a Hammer fan stand at their own right as well-placed self-beliefs.

Of which leaves me precious little room to talk about this issue. Which is a pity since two of our new covers which are probably the worst horrors facing the world today: nuclear annihilation and environmental poisoning of the atmosphere. Read them, enjoy the films they discuss but please, for the sake of the world, resist the means that such films take. They leave writers about the bright but looking rather

don't read

29

Vol 3 No 5

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MEDIA MACABRE

4

Festival based special correspondent Tony Crawley sends us the first of two reports from the year's Cannes Film Festival, Anthony Tappin finds time before his recent wedding (congratulations, Tony and Marika!) to visit the American Film Market and to supply the first in a regular series on the B scene with a look at Ronny Haden, and editor Dave Reeder looks at the latest in the fantasy film book world from the exotic location of his desk in London SE14.

ANSWER DESK

15

The *Shendor* controversy explained at last, a *Batman* checklist and more in our replies to your queries.

POST MORTEM

16

Directorship, video listings and genre based comic strip adaptations are all discussed in this month's letter column.

AFTER THE END

18

Following the success of *Mad Max* and the seemingly endless stream of Italian post-apocalyptic action movies Kim Newman provides an overview of the sub-genre of *After Disaster* films.

STATESIDE SHOCKER NO. 1

28

The start of a new regular series by American film historian Randy Palmer on the lesser known areas of American fantasy cinema, beginning with the career of his friend Paul Blaisdel, monster designer supreme.

MUTANT

30

A report on the making of this new anti pollution film perhaps the strongest indictment yet of the way we are destroying our planet, by Tony Crawley.

THE POETRY OF EVIL

34

Steve Jones picks up the threads of his Vincent Price history from last issue and weaves a spell binding tale of Price's best remembered decade - the 1960s.

HISTORY OF HAMMER

41

The continuation of Bob Sheridan's regular feature which carries the story forward from *The Lost Continent* to *Scars of Dracula*, as well as a diversion towards Hammer's foray into Science Fiction in the 1960s: *Moon Zero Two*.

CAMPBELL'S COLUMN

45

As always Ramsey Campbell rounds off the issue's features with an expert's analysis of Stephen King's *Pet Sematary* and a first look at new British horror discovery Clive Barker.

TERROR TALES

46

As a change of pace between our regular film adaptations and our new exciting strip series (see Editorial for full details), we are proud to present 'The Right Holds Terror', originally scheduled for *NO. 24* (First Series) Script: Tim Vinterbury. Art: Brian Lewis.

MEDIA MACABRE

by TONY CRAWLEY

HALLOWEEN II



DEAD-LY BATTLE

Spring is spring, the birds have no... and if you wonder where I see the answer, it's where else but the Cannes film festival. It's early days here under the Mediterra-

nean sun, so not all the volume comes out of Cannes. Most of it, and more to come next year, first off, the bad news: George Romero has seemingly lost the battle with upstart producer Tom Fox. You may recall the story. If not, *New Readers Start Here* (and where the hell you been anyway?). Tom Fox announced a movie here at Cannes the time last year in conjunction with Brian's Hemdale outfit - *Return of the Living Dead* - written by John Russo, co-author of Romero's 1968 classic, *Night of the Living Dead*, and to be directed by Tobin Hooper in 3-D. Romero, or Richard Rubinstein, his partner, the president of George's Laurel combine, hit the fan and yelled foul.

The matter has since been to arbitration at the Motion Picture Association of America - and Fox/Hemdale won their fight. The title is there, which seems very odd indeed. Romero, perhaps, doesn't mind too much as the film, no longer in 3-D (like so many films) is now new-written (and to be directed by) Dan O'Bannon. Russo is out of the deal.

Of course, Romero doesn't even see living dead in his titles anymore, he doesn't have to. His name is draw enough at the box office. But the point at stake was that the public recognise living dead as a Romero trademark almost and shouldn't be confused and ripped-off in this fashion (no more than Romero, himself, should).

George is due to begin shooting the finale of his trilogy *Guy of the Dead* after the summer. You can be sure that Richard Rubinstein is watching Hemdale and their ongoing hype like a hawk and if they overdo the living dead stuff and try for example to make it appear that O'Bannon's film is the finale, then time he'll go to court. I think they should anyway. George and Richard have been Mr. New Guys about the whole mess for far too long. Just as Tom Fox knew they would be.

ROMERO TV

Best news from the Romero front here at Cannes. His tele series *Tales From The Darkside*, has found its backer and gets into production shortly (Wake up, Aunty Bosh and buy it!). The pilot film for the proposed series did so well in the ratings last Halloween it was inevitable some outfit would come up with the right deal and Longbow Broadcast Service did just that. The series is not geared to the big networks with all their stipulations about what can or can't be seen/heard/implied, etc., but sold to local stations.

The pilot film, *Trick or Treat*, was made by Bob Balaban, the actor who was Trafford's usual partner in *Gleaze Encounters*. Once he's free of his role in the 2001 sequel *2013*, Bob hopes to direct more of the series - the idea being to give the films to newcomers with flair. Several scriptwriters are offering scenarios for the show with the added hope they'll get a directing shot.

HAPPY HOOPER

Tobin Hooper quickly removed himself from *Return of the Living Dead* once the title row erupted. Tobin is no fan of trouble. He's a hooper at Ebbw Vale in London, finishing off *Space Vampires* - first announced by Cannon Films about six years ago. Well, it's finally in production, or indeed, in the can, all but the tricky effects stuff being carried out by John Dykstra plus a group of Euro-ites, including the first BFX hotshot out of France. Hooper has put together a good cast on all sides of the camera. He has Alan Hale on camera and John Graymark is the art director.

Ironically, the script of Colin Wilson's novel is by Hooper's success be. That Other Film, Ben Dillenon and Don Jakoby. Steve Kalkbush, once the screen's Charlie Manson, heads the apoc-jock with the mystery up yonder. He's backed up by Peter Firth, Frank Folley and French nude. Melinda May I should be saying some of the movie while at the festival and you can be sure my comments will be on this page next time around.

RAMBALDI LAND

Carlo Rambaldi's company setting up a Disney London leaves park in America - the location of which, thus far, remains a top secret. The place will be known as *Milennium*. All the rides are scenes of terror and apart from the real folk paying to get in, and the staff tending them, all other creatures wandering about the place will be *Wetworld* in the *metamorphosis* designed by Carlo. He may not be allowed to have E.T. in there, but I gather Dino De Laurentiis says he can have new versions of *King Kong*, *The White Buffalo*, and maybe the giant serph worm things from *Duna*. Sounds just the place to dump your mother-in-law.

HOME OF HAMMER!

The old home of Hammer Films, I mean this real Hammer Films, the ones with Chris and Pate and dear old Michael Ripper, turning up all over the place, has been sold. Bray Studios was picked up for £120,000 by Samuelsons, the company which supplies cement and the like to most every movie made in Britain - and Europe too. They don't make films. They just help others to make films. Even more so now they have their own studio to rent. Don't ring up, ring them.

OLD FILMS AS NEW

Once again I'm asked to have to say that the series from the light film front is far from healthy. And no, I'm not referring to the hypercritical moans of the video nasty brigade.

In the marketplace, at the Cannes festival in May, the story was much the same as at the big Los Angeles event in March. Genre production (not genre, that it) is down, way down, and too many far too many far from golden dimes are being whisked off shelves to fill the void.

Except you cannot fill voids with voids. You can't fill voids with just 'voids, either. It takes more, a whole lot more. What is required is more decently, one might say professionally made, planned, thought-out, designed horror films - ones actually directed and written, not scribbled out during a hangover's stupor. Not more and still more sad, n' sorry tar from the shelves marked *Flap*.

Who cares, say most of the penny-ante cinema companies, just as long as we can pick 'em up dirt cheap, fill out our video-cassette portfolios and get money back that way fast.

So, look out people. Be warned. A ton or two of early 80's rubbish is about to be spended upon us, bristling with bursting hype designed to convince us that it's all good films - hot, snappy, not starchy. Just in case the true game buff among us can recognise yesterday's *Believe* being bounced out in bright new product, most of the original titles have been changed (well more than once) on the ads, and on the marketing of the films - but, often enough, never on the end titles. (That might cost an extra five dollars, you see).

All of which is just more proof - if more were required - of how the money-grabbing companies think of us, the filmgoers, the ticket-buyers, the punters or suckers in their lingo. They don't care much of a damn, unless there's a dollar in it. And then not always.

For instance, around Cannes I noticed that Sam Arkoff's first film since taking up his legendar-

dary A.I.P. company was out and about. Again. The fact that Sam made it (and with all his own money) and that Ronald Shuart, one of the *Allen* team, wrote it, means that it's a slightly above the norm in classmate horror. It just never worked is all. In 1981 Sam called it *Three Blind Mice*. By 1983, he'd found some other title which escapes me for the moment. Not important. What is, is that Marley Productions have now taken the film over from Sam. Marley call it *The Final Terror* and shows it down everyone's collection shelf. Because they've determined that the two top babes in this class are the currently hot ladies, Rachel Ward and Daryl Hannah - the *Splash* inroad.

You will, then, be not only surprised to learn that Marley put their ad art upon this fest. Only trouble is they don't know their blonde from their brunette. In the ads, Marley put Rachel's picture under Daryl's name and vice-versa. What's more, they spell Daryl as Darryl.

But that's distributors for you, Mandy. They know the value of names. Of certain names. They just don't know from faces. You can put the tape down to the obvious fact of director life. They hardly ever see films. They only sell 'em. And it's left to Quality's new title *Video Fantasy* to try and sort out hype in history.

BLACK ROOM BOY

Also made in 1981 and still looking for a buyer is *The Black Room*, written and directed by Norman Thaddeus Vane, singer of Farid Mayne's. Actually Vane co-directed with Ely Hammer. Two helmets seem about right as the murky script has two distinct storylines - one about a pair of siblings, not far removed from *Dennis* and *Bowie* in *The Hunger*, the other about a guy working his social fantasies out in the room of the title. As such, these tales aren't bad. Two films for the price of one and all that. It's only when the team meet - collide, is more like it - in a rather ridiculous denouement of the brother and sister being turned into zombies by the husband and wife that the everything blows up in everyone's face. The cast will remain anonymous here to protect their innocence.

007 Mk. 1

Offer still under Cannes' sun, I found *Night of the Claw* on offer. *Three Island Claws* (and I heard of it in - um, let's see now - yeah, 1985) it remains interesting only for the glimpse or four, of a distinct one time called Barry Nelson.

He was the first ever James Bond, thirty years ago in an American TV version of Ian Fleming's last 007 book, *Casino Royale* - eight full years before Sean Connery's cat-like walk down a Mayfair street impressed the hell out of *Blood* and *Salem* after their first encounter with the unknown actor.

YOU WANT OLDER?

Oh, sure, the 70s are still alive and well and being re-padded along the *Cosette* line. I doubt, though, if many buyers (even video firms) snapped up *Deadline* - a rather deadly film made in Canada with Stephen Young when he was - five years ago. The eleven-year-old *Last Victim* was trotted out anew as *Faced Enemy* (well, it's another psychotic killer on the loose). In similar fashion, some actors, so *Final Terror*, this was hyped big because its once unknown stars are now the recognisable (barely) Tanya (Sharon) Roberts, and Mrs. de Palma; Nancy Allen. The title does its utmost to cash in on both ladies' erotic image. The script (obviously) does not in short. No nudie.

And then what about Australia's *The Hideous Sun Demise* - *The Special Edition*? No home should be without it. Hah! This proves to be director Robert Clark's 1980 movie with some 1980 ratings inserted by another director, Stephen Le Rouque ('n' 1987).



Quill poster firm. You've seen these films but here's how the French were drawn to the same movies. *Halloween II* and *Wes Craven's Scream Thing*.

Ever get the feeling that you've not only written this book but also seen the film and poster. Mr King? No, it's not the Italian poster for *Cape* but a gimp-off called *Monster Dog*!

NEW FILMS AS OLD!

Tragically most of the new genre offerings come over as badly as the old stuff. Who, after all, is going to be greatly excited much less successfully tempted, by the fact that *Aldo Ray* has made yet another comeback (he tried it last time in portul with a couple of powder movies made down Mexico way *To Kill a Stranger* for starters, with Donald Pleasence involved), and *Valtures in Paradise* which also brought back Yvonne De Carlo, no less.

Young Canadian actor Chris Makepeace is busy in *Valley of Death* despite the fact it was directed by one Sparky Greene. However, I feel Chris is next eating *The Falcon* and *The Snowman*, will do rather more for him. His director this time is John Schlesinger.

Michael Winner has a new thriller ready called *Screen For Hire*, which I'm told is far busier than *The Sentinel* (which can't be hard) and if it isn't, Winner will just make his next movies from *Death Wish III*. The word was also good on Tony Krammer's *Thelma & Louise* - but quite the opposite on it I decided to leave well alone. Richard W. Haines, *Splatter University*, where in, according to the gasty hype, the school coffins are blood red, and you can 'earn a higher degree in terror' Hu, hum!

NEW WORLD WINNER

The company that was *Colleen's* - *New World* - has hit its first triumph since the new channel took over: It's what ails you, a Steve King story. *Children of the Core* is a short story. Or, it was. Nothing but nothing, it allowed to be spiced on-screen three days, though. And so, King's story has been streamlined out to fairly fill all that annoying 90 minutes gap between sci-fi/sf/popcorn sales time in world cinema. And that's so good.

Although there are one of these good moments when it pays to have taken your gall to see it with you, the feature is short only on real style, suspense, special effects and supernaturalism feelings. But it's still raking in the dollars across the pond, so what the hell do I know - right?

Peter Horton and Linda Hamilton (he's better than the guy, invariably the case when King's women characters are concerned) are the couple running across a lightning-bolt set of Nebraskan youngsters who've worshiped all the adults in their region and formed a not-quite Mormon cult, worshipping the god of the corn fields. John Franklin leads the kids. He's good, too.

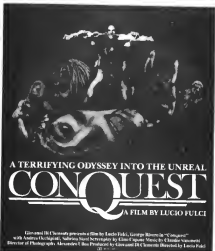
Big box office numbers or no, the result has to tell me: very low in the currently ceaseless supply of filmed King books. For me, *Christine*, *Come and Go* are the best, with *The Dead Zone* being among the worst (so bad it makes *The Shining* look good). However, the *Carny* director, Jim Fritzk Kerrel, must have something going for him. Like friends or agents in high places? He's been rewarded for his Nebraska effort by being given the task of making *The Shining II*. Actually, I'm none too sure if that's a reward.

NEW HORIZONS?

The company that is *Comer's* – New Horizon, he calls it – is not living up to its label. Or *Comer's* potential. Jolly Roger has got stuck in the swind n' sorcery (particularly, the sorcery) groove. It's difficult to tell his latest opususes, one from *Luther*.

In the right-hand corner: **The Warrior and the Sorceress**, who proves to be David Caradine and Mera Soras in hot-pants (both). In the left corner: Richard Hill as **Danthialkian**, 'the last great warrior king', with Barbi Benton as his slave.

And just in case you don't get the full picture



No stopping Lupo Fulco: He goes on and on, switching styles to suit each change of the genre. His latest (and) is a mix of Conan and *Quest For Fire*. Hence the title: *Conquest*. [Below] Want to talk about nets? Well, don't choose Richard W. Hames as a conversation companion.



from titles alone. Roger Corman buys it up for us with rampant hype. *Carrianna's* flick is cast in 'an age undreamed of. An age of mystery and magic. Of weirds and sorcery,' while *Hill's* is 'a journey to an age of awesome magic. The might of the sword. The evil of the sorcerer.' New horrors, indeed!

NEW CENTURY SAVES

The company that is Bernard Tapscott's — New Century, which is neither New World nor Horron, but if you think it is *Bentle* will be, dead-end, delighted — has come to the rescue of the terror tale that was shelved a year ago not for the usual reason of not being up to snuff, but not having enough scratch to finish it with *Invisible Strangler*, it's called. *Alas* — The *Mistake As Before*.

Robert Foxworth is finishing the lead role now that New Century's Mr. T has come up with the necessary half-million: givebacks to provide missing scenes, editing, music and what have you. Bob Foxworth is no stranger to our genre. He was Dan Curtis' choice as *Frankenstein* in the rather good 1973 tele flick. In the same year, Bob was concerned with *The Devil's Daughter*, another television for which Jeannot Szwarc chose Shelley Longenecker to play Sarah! And Bob also starred, *Alas*, in John Frankenheimer's eleven-hour 1976 attempt at incoherent movies, *Prey*. Play that one hadn't run out of festival juice.

NEW IMAGE

Room for one more — 2 Right!

The company that is Ed Chase's — New Image, no less — is also in the retelling ghost-worthy business of making shuddered movies. It's only done to make a quick killing out of selling the video rights. And as we all know, few companies actually care about what goes out on screens. Anyone Image's pick-up from Franco and one collapsed Canadian company (well, it wasn't called New anything, you see), is *Silent Madness*, replacing *Casbah*'s crazy old Swede, Viveca Lindfors, to all kinds of 3-D mayhem — and *The Gorn That Dripped Blood*, of which recall and

Ruth gettuses tend to signal New Image's corporate image, right enough. Ed Chase says his new film will shortly be making their own movies. He aims to start production with (a) two horror movies and (b) two classic remakes — by which, I presume, he means two re-makes of classics. Otherwise, like all new and old distributors, he's already making the grave mistake of bragging before the stuff is even made!

ENTER: OBROW FILMS

You've come across highbrow films and lowbrow of course. Right! Now we meet the Obrow variety. Jeff Obrow productions which happen to be directed by Jeffrey Obrow — and he, co-scripser, co-editor and cameraman, Stephen Carpenter (John, he says). They are two Obrows headed this way.

The first was made in 1976 as *Death Gorn*, then it became known — after *Porky's* pathos? — as *Frank*. It's now shaping up, via the New Image, as *The Gorn That Dripped Blood*. Wuff said? It's a kind of indoor *Friday The 13th* with Leif Ladinski and her campus mates clearing out a college dormitory during the vacation period. Then, along comes every recent horror film's little helper — one killer, crazed, highly repulsive, not to say downright rapacious, and forever doing his level best to make sure the scanty cast members do not squander the lowly budget by requiring overtime. They're all knocked over in rapid order. And, but of course, the patty — the oh-so obvious suspect, isn't really the slay machine at all. No harm.

INSIDE YOUR HEAD...THE SCREAMING NEVER STOPS




Silent Madness

MAG ENTERPRISES and GREGORY EARLS
present
A Simon Radtman film
SILENT MADNESS
Starring Belinda Montgomery • Viveca Lindfors • Solly Marx • David Greenan
Sydney Lassick • Roderick Cook
Screenplay by Robert Zimmerman and William P. Milling Directed by Thomas G. Smith
Co-Produced by Seven Values Entertainment and U.S. The Radtman Group • Robert Zimmerman
Executive Producer Gregory Earls Producer William P. Milling Released and Distributed by Simon Radtman
Dolby Stereo Sound S.D. **16 COLOR STRIPS** Open to National Distribution

3D or not 3D. Aye, that's the question. The boom now seems to be over — witness *Enter the Assassin* which opened flat as a flea although shot in 3D. As for this one from Simon Radtman (top), you have to read the small print to see it's a 3D film. (Below) Yes, zombie film — soon, last year.

GEORGE A. ROMERO'S



**DAY
OF
THE
DEAD**

POWER-LESS

Much the same can be said – indeed, it has been – about the next Drow offering, which started life as *Evil Passage* and then perished George Pals' 1988 film, but not naturally, as artistry and because *The Power*.

Tricky little to live up to that. I mean to be any good at all, something called *The Power* has to have some. Pals' movie, not exactly helped by being assisted with George who's seventy-five than Hamilton, didn't have that power. And the Drow has even less.

More students are on call. But the time they're high school years. And it's the little, given away to them, not the North of Karamunda. But Arctic hunking, causing all the not-inconceivable body count.

Both films are, well, exceedingly Drow: very easy to mock, but I should remember what I read when people used to mock Michael Winner ten years ago or more. At least the folks in *making* films and the more Drow and Carpenter make, hopefully the better they'll be. Jeff had a good enough time around here – both films came from much the same crew. Chris Young has a good ear for game scores and Matthew Mungle's effects show similar potential. One day, at their acts will really gall, perhaps. For the moment, well they sort of – congeal.

OF GREEK ORIGIN

Canada came up with a decent amount movie in *Of Unknown Origin* – the first movie from Greek director George P. Comatas since emigrating to the Dominion. (That's why he's now George P. and not so in the old days of stuff like *The Casanovas*, *Greenglass*, *Massacre in Rome* and *Escape To Athens* [George Pan Comatas]). He was once upon a time, the assistant director for both Otto Preminger (*Exodus*) and Michael Cacoyannis (*Zorba The Greek*). "I was beginning to think I could be an assistant all my life. I wouldn't say yes off," he says. He got his main break from Lord Low Grade. His Canadian work is better.

Origin is quite a visual tour de force of times and provides what so many genre films lack – genuine terror when our hero Pete Walker is forced into mortal combat with... well, not wanting to give the whole game away, let's say with a natural terror. The film comes from Chauncy G. Parker. It's book, *The Warrior*, scripted by Brian Taggart, and features a good Canadian cast, including the delightful Jennifer Dale and veteran Lawrence Dane and introduces a recent playmate of one year at another, Shannon Tweed. This Tweed suits her down to the ground. Her steady leg ain't bad either.

P. J. TIME

It used to be that Canadian films at Cannes were full of American actors, while Australian films had British stars. Now the Aussies have fallen for Hollywoodians, mainly Gregory Harrison, who *Razorback* (see later paragraph) and the luscious P.J. Soles in the title role of *Innocent Prey*, from director Coling Eggleston – the man who made the brilliant *Long Weekend*.

P.J. (which stands for Pamela Janet) is being down-said from yet another dream killer. Her hubby, And she knows he's no good. 'See she's seen him do a Norman Bates as a hooker in a show. She tells all to the sheriff (who's Martin Balsam, the *Psycho* private eye) and once hubby's reconverted she flies to Australia. But he gets out, you see, picks up a Queenie and the rest of the blood and accents are pure Australian.

WHO'S WHO?

And there is one other new horror film out of America, at least. Roberta Flury made *The Decade* in New York with an inevitable batch of

unknown (i.e. cheap) actors. Actually, some of their faces or figures may not be as unknown as all that as Roberts, but as many horrors are around today, as an ex-porno director. And they usually give an acting break to one of their ex – like Chuck Vincent starring Paul Sutton (aka Jerry Butler) in his *Propples* funder. Roberts I might add is the lady responsible for the new film which brought the term slash movie into modern parlance.

BAND CALL

Making his usual Cannes splash, Charlie Bend has films or promo reels going to show off his 34 product ranging from soap movies like David Allen's *Primavera* to a slap order meal to *Greenland* called *Ghoulish*. John Buechler supplied the not-quite-Rambaldi ghouls which do the best to steal the limelight from director Luca Borevich's cast which includes *Eraserhead* star Jack Nance and Jayme Manfield's lookalike daughter, Marsha Hargrey.

MOVIE MONEY

Main reason for the continuing diminishing number of our films being made each year is the sheer cost of film-making. Life everything else in life, it's gone up. And up. And then some. These days the average budget for average Hollywood movies is in the area of \$11,000,000 and a film has got to make that, and more, before it's in profit. Horror films do not necessarily hit the profit margins anymore, unless like all other winds, they're in the megafilm category, like *Pollanget*.

This year the Hollywood combines expect a harvest of about 150 movies plus the various studios' Classics Division specialty releases and, of course, some foreign imports. In all, therefore, Hollywood expects to spend on movie-making – and buying – this year a total of, wait for it, \$1,500,000,000. Yeah, billion. And to think, his Dashing old quibbles with my expenses.

STRIP HEROES

Among the movies awaiting production dates – not to mention fully financed and agreed budgets – are *Reveries*, *Mandrill*, *Splendour* and even *Big Riff*. But I think you can forget the *Big Riff* strip to film idea. Having lost one director after another – John Landis, Walter Hill, Richard Benjamin – the movie has been cancelled. Too expensive, you see, at \$14 million. Unless, of course, Warren Beatty changes his mind and takes the title role, after all – and the director's choice! That could happen. He's true at the moment, he can't do his marriage comedy now that *Splash* has made such a splash. (Fancy Gevey bearing Beatty to the – bus office – draw) What he could do is cut in bits from his last waver and call it... *Dick Tracy vs Reds*.

CANNES CHAT

Ram Ramen she'll do. I have any *Red Dead* hassle with the nasty infestations with his new movie *Crimo Wave* (or *XXZ*, *Murder*) is a murder spoof. Cast includes one of The Three Stooges gang – John Badham taking over *American Flyer* from Peter Yates. John always inherits his movies, *Rise Thunder*, *War Games* etc. from others – Vera Miles, a Name again since *Psycho II*, heads up Larry Stewart's *The Intimates*. And her screen daughter, Meg Tilly, is having a lot of an *input* with Tim Matheson for the last Owen director, Graham Baker. Robert Ginty, surprisingly straight in *The Act*, is back to plasma-popping as *The Executioner* and then, *Enteromiser II* – His old directing mentor, James Goldstone, is switching to Costa country, I gather, for *Road of the Dungeonmaster* while Dino De Laurentiis re-spins his Rome studio, Decette, for a female *Coosa*

called *Red Sonja* – while (and to think the skunk started with Gitty) British director James Cameron turns Arnold Schwarzenegger into an alien Terminator.

Giannina mean has a song – from Peter Gabriel – Dario Argento's *Taxihome* finally unveiled in America as *Ushana*. Not only can't U.S. distributors spell, they have absolutely no terms. As his wife Nancy Allen, was tied up with Jon Carpenter's production of *The Philadelphia Experiment*. Brian De Palma had Tipsy Hedra's daughter, Melissa Griffith, as his *Baby Double*, opposite *Ghost Story* a *Craig Watson*. Brother and sister film-makers Mark and Pam Chornovsky made a fantasy short called *Strange Tenebris*. It lasts 34 minutes and has – count 'em – 123 special effects. *Rainier* Adam West and Spill Danning among the pursuits of *Young Lady Chatterbox II* with Harlee McBride appear. Not that young. She made the first one in 1976. The late Vic Morrow's daughter, Jennifer Jason-Leigh, takes a *Death Ride to Ozark* in Jonathan Kaplan's new flick *Moonrise*. Vic's old *Combat* TV war series (1962-65) is back on the American box. It never came here, so how about it. Channel Four! Great gang-bro stuff. Mrs Thatcher would adore it. Ken Russell going to work for Corran's old company, New World. He's turning away from composers for *Cinema of Peasants* – cheer da same thing for Ken I suppose. (And that's just from the first few days in Cannes. More next issue.)

THE CLIPPER COMETH

Duran Duran could be in trouble soon. How are they gonna keep Australia's Russell Mulcahy down on the video-clip farm now that he's seen feature films? Mulcahy made the clips that made the Duran group around the world – everything from *Hungry* like *The Wolf to Ulan* of the Snake. He's short vide by the ton. Jim Carrey stole *Devil Eyes*, *Spaniards*, *Ballin*, the *Stones*, *Red Street*, *Superman*, the best of *Sally Joy* (President) and *Bliss* John's still standing because of Russell. He is, the pre-eminent exponent of the video new art form even if he hasn't directed *My Weekend* yet. And he'll be making a few, although he's now back home and finished his first feature – a downer under *Jaws* number about a ferociously wild bear of the *Razorback* family.

Mulcahy's debut, based on Peter Brown's book *Miss Jaws* and the recent *Orion Baby* case, once Bill Kerr's grandchild is taken off by the bear and the old guy is put on trial for murdering the lady American journalist Judy Morris (an Australian star in fact) goes looking for the truth of the matter – and finds it. *Est. Judy!* So hubby lies in from the States to look for her. Hubby is Gregory Harrison, star of the *Trapper John* TV series.

The rotten old jowl far from Miss Jaws is a terrific mechanical monster designed and constructed by Bob McCann and the film – tags in action, suspense and chills – is shot by the man behind the *Mad Max II* camera, Brian Semler. So George Miller's barrels are in trouble with Mulcahy's cinematic art, just as much as Duran Duran's future is, particularly as Russell has wasted some time is getting on with another movie, *Jingles*.

THE AMERICO-AUSSIE

Scripter of *Razorback* is Everett de Roche already familiar to us due to his fine collection of down under genre items like *Patrol*, *The Long Weekend*, *Snapped*, the *Redneckman*, *Harlequin*, *The Survivor* and *Jesse Lee Curtis Road Games*. Despite his long association with the Aussie industry – not in as great a shape as it was a few years back – de Roche is American. He often takes a lot of in his movies, more to have a reason to be handy on the set (or re-writes) rather than any great wish to be an actor. He much prefers the solitary art of writing. "Most of

BEFORE
YOUR FUNERAL...
BEFORE
YOU ARE BURIED...
BEFORE
YOU ARE COVERED
WITH THE LAST
SHOVELFUL OF DIRT...

BE SURE YOU ARE
REALLY DEAD!

MORTUARY

...WHERE NOBODY RESTS IN PEACE

ARISTA FILMS and HICKMAN PRODUCTIONS, INC. present A HOWARD AVEDIS film
"MORTUARY" Starring MARY McDONOUGH DAVID WALLACE BILL PAXTON
LYNDA DAY GEORGE CHRISTOPHER GEORGE Music by JOHN CACAVAS
Written and Produced by HOWARD AVEDIS and MARLENE SCHMIDT
Directed by HOWARD AVEDIS An ARISTA FILMS INC. Release



Teeline: about time the shovel back to the drawing board. Since it's release one of the stars, Christopher George has died

the time," he says, "he stole what I can't say I have a lot of control over it."

"I don't wish to be linked into any particular style. The suspense thriller (here's that for a genre suggestion) just happens to be a popular type of film at present. I like putting comedy into drama. But I'm scared of doing straight comedy. I'm certainly more comfortable with black comedy. Essentially I'm a cynic."

GUEST STAR(S)

Talking of film makers coming out from behind the camera, I hear that Steven Spielberg is acting again in his production of Joe Dante's troubled *Gremlins*. Composer Jerry Goldsmith has a bit-role in it, too. Spielberg was last seen on screen at the very end of John Leeson's *The Blues Brothers* (1980).

The *Gremlins* trouble? Not funny enough was his Spielbergish a verdict after the first sneak preview in America. He's having the film re-cut, putting back in much of the comedy Dante originally sliced out.

RUMOURS, RUMOURS!

Spielberg - as usual - is tipped as the director of the next *Star Wars* chapter supposedly due before the cameras by the autumn for an opening next summer. I need to doubt this story. I can just about believe that Luc Lucas is planning a fourth galactic venture, not that Spielberg will direct. He's busy enough with his own plans including *E.T. II*, of course (to follow the upcoming *E.T.* re-issue) and Michael Jackson is beginning to get impatient about that *Peter Pan* project. Mike's not getting any younger, it's so boring thinking of that money!

STEVEN'S CLAN

And to further celebrate the publication in French - Japanese and German to follow - of my book on Steven Spielberg, let's check what his mates are up to...

Pottergeist writers Mark Victor and Michael Grais are credited to producer status for their next summers, *The Thin Line*, being backed by the brothers Unger, Anthony B. and Stephen A.

The *Dead Cows* and I *Wanna Hold Your Hand* director, Robert Zemeckis has a boggan Indiana Jones-like hit out called *Reminding The Stars*, produced by and starring Michael (son of Kirk) Douglas.

And the *Dogswalker* team, director Hal Barwood and his co-writer/producer partner Matthew Robbins - who wrote Spielberg's first feature, *The Paper Moon* (ten years ago) - are locked into an ultra top secret horror feature at 20th Century Fox. Sole fact that the Fox guys will reveal is that the movie will cost \$7 million (not that interesting - really whets the old appetite, huh?

BIG CHILLS

Brave! Rather than taking the simplest route to an *Android II* the *Android* team, director Aaron Lipsett and writer Don Oppel, are moving into big chills country with *City Limits*. John Stockwell, the good guy in *Cherish* (well they were all good guys, but you know what I mean), co-stars with *Quest For Fire*'s nude Rex Dawson. They're a busy duo. Rex Dawson daughter of *Grease*'s Cherie finished *Beat Street* in time for a racy *Grease* bash of an opening, and young Stockwell is by now up to his blue eyes in Greg Deaton's special effects for *Reductive Dances*.

Also sprucing the *City Limits* scenery are James Earl Jones, the voice of you-know-who and Paul Newman's son (and everybody stills from Ben Gazzara to Jack Lemmon's), Robby Benson.



Two contrasting shots from the latest Lee: The new face (well, no, the old discone face) but a new style for Christopher Lee as the hairy adversary in the Australian spoof, *The Return of Captain Invincible*



MAGNUM OPUS

Post after a Michael Caine voice and then say after me. Not a little people know dat Tom Selleck's best movie was not *High Road To China* but 1972's *Daughters of Satan*. He got such a fright in that his individual grew and helped make him more magnanimous.

FRANKENSTEIN '84

Two new Berlin Frankenstein are brushing down their best suits for parties later in the year. One from France. One from Britain. Our one, aimed mainly at the big bucks of American television is a version of the short-lived 1960 Broadway play. It was shot in Leeds (of all places) in April. Robert Powell, formerly Dracula as *Rochester* and *Sweeney*, is the good/bad doctor with David Warner, as busy back home as he was in Hollywood for the last few years, as the monster. Also cast: 19-year-old Sir John Gielgud (not, I fancy as the brother) and Mrs. Paul Simon, aka Carole Fisher.

The frog version — just think if they tickled *Dracula* they'd have no trouble with all the garb on the set — is a bit of a comedy called *Frankenstein 90*, directed by the dependable Allen Jessup. He good doc is Jean Rochefort, which should cause instant giggles outside France, as he's a veritable dandy of Peter Sellers' Inspector Clouseau.

Rochefort's monster is Eddy Mitchell, a veteran rock 'n' roller now doing very well in movies — a movie he plainly adores as he's asked a renewed film buff. He also hosts a show on the third French TV network that is designed like a night out at the pictures back in the '50s. He shoots all the talking stuff in a real cinema, packed with folk in 'horrid' gear and tells them movie stories about the evening's entertainment — always a double bill of old American movies, plus musicals, cartoons and the commercials of the time and last month's festival. Great idea, huh?

Without wishing to be unkind to Eddy Mitchell (real name: Schmoll), he won't require too much make-up for his new role. Not on his, at all, of a schizoid, anyway.

THRILLING

The real Monster of '84 remains Michael Jackson. But his and John Landis's *Thriller* vid clip didn't get on the short list of the best short film Oscar nominees (and how he paid off). No matter. This clip is making a mint indeed, in Britain it's fast outstripping the previous best-seller on cassette, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Last week I heard was Jackson 100,000 copies, Indy 80,000. In fact that adds up to £2 million. From little Britain alone.

You'll be able to get a 3-D version of *Thriller* soon — seven 3-D titles of prancing Mike, the American werewolf in Los Angeles. It's part of the latest Viewmaster picture set and comes complete with sound.

DEATH HOUSE

Allen Beattie reverted to Gothics for his own show biz tale, *Delusion*, in 1980. A conspiracy with the grandiloquent name of The International Police Show Company picked it up for release and then, immediately, went out of business. Hence the delay until a New York group, New American Films, revived it on the property with its eyes on the main chance of pay-TV.

The title was changed and Beattie's flick is now *The House Where Death Lives*. That's a fair comment. There's very little life in this deadly dulled account of the deaths happening in the mansion of the Feltham Estate.

For once, the actors can be said to be much better than their given lines and circumstances. Particularly, redhead nurse Patricia Peery and

her crippled patient, the invariably competent Joseph Cotton. For a change from chainaws, knives flashing in the moonlight and/or ancient Egyptian or Aztec swords and other relics the murder(s) weapon is very ordinary, quite domestic and Agatha Christie-like — a table leg.

The cause of all the blood-letting, though, remains that tired old standby of most past Tins is being unleashed so often of late that I'm beginning to have second thoughts about the life style of our own dear Norman Bates and his Momma.

DAY AFTER DAZE

Four Month Working Time: Britain's reply to *The Day After* — the most financially successful television ever released to cinema — is the *Back to the Future*. Australia has a teenage version called *One Night Stand*, which features the crooking Midnight Oil group among the kids facing their last night on earth. But the West Germans have found the best title for their version. *The Day Before*.

SPEEDY COHEN

Call him speedy. Larry Cohen is rushing through horror movies in New York. Making 'em, that is, not watching them. Shooting had hardly been completed on *Dead Alley* when he got moving on *Special Effects*. Casts of both ventures are unknown for now. Brad Rign is the only actor to get into both.

JACK'S ALL RIGHT

Well, something wicked that way went. No matter, Jack Clayton is alive and well and full of plans. He's bought the rights to Shirley Jackson's book, *We Have Always Lived in The Castle* (since 1962) and is planning to shoot Paul Thain's scenario in Britain. Shirley Jackson, of course, has been filmed before — notably by Robert Wise with *The Haunting* in 1963.

LAYING THE GHOST

But don't be sucked into seeing *Haunted*. Thinking it's another Shirley (Michael or Jesse) Jackson ghost trip. It isn't — despite the casting of Brooke Adams and Triin Van Boven. Their roles are far removed from their offerings in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* or *The House*. Don't say you've not been warned. (Good film for all that, best work from both ladies in many a hot summer).

OVERHEARD . . .

The next Bond film with Roger Moore. From *A View To A Kill*, looks like being the first of the series to change its lan. Fleming title. Well, Bessie can't swing it. "And it's always a thrill! From a view to a kill!" Cosplay Bond professed, Jack Schwartzman promises to bring Alfred Bester's *The Stars My Destination* to the screen next year. Good news. Now for the bad. Lorenza Sembrini has a deal or three in the script. Kevin McClory, who wrote the *Thunderbolt* rights and got *Newer Say Never Again* off the ground, set it again preparing another blockbuster. *Spectre*.

Spectre. *Aurora* BBC concerned in the \$10 million sale sales stemming from John Christopher's trilogy *The Tripods*. Christopher Lee back in India again, in *Indra* to be exact, for *The Bengal Lancers* with ex-bronze Miles O'Keefe, Michael York and 1984's Emma Sutton.

One-man-band Martin Rastman (his own producer, director and scripter) has turned Los Angeles into *East Town* (not hard, believe me) with a cast of hopefuls. Now that *Dune* is beating out all over, Police-man Strip is making *The Bride*, from Mary (Frankenstein) Shelley's novel, directed by the guy who first shined him into movies with *Gustav*, Francis Rodden.

HORROR HOTLINE

by ANTHONY TATE

SANTOS - THE LAST ROUND

The February saw the death of Santos, the famed Mexican wrestler who made about a dozen wrestling-horror films in his heyday. His exact age was unknown, but we can assume that he was born around 1930 which made him only about 55 at the time of his death. El Santo (Santos in US dubbed prints) made his big screen debut in 1962 in *The Man in the Silver Mask* and was an instant hit with Spanish-speaking audiences. This led to a string of pictures spanning almost 20 years in which he met all kinds of monsters, mad doctors and super villains. But it is his *Santos* and the *Blue Demon* which is best remembered today. Ironically, although he had only recently retired from wrestling, a new Santos film was in the planning stages - the first for 11 years. Obviously those who followed his exploits are now out of luck unless Blue Demon steps in.

SHORT TAKE 1

Supernova II had its American TV premiere earlier this year and had about 16 minutes of allegedly cut material added, thus making some at least of some of the most confusing sequences...

OLEN-RAY STRIKES BACK

A couple of weeks back I told you about Fred Olen Ray, low budget film maker extraordinaire. Well, he's back with a vengeance and recently told me about his latest hopes, disappointments and plans.

"My latest picture *Behemoth* is scheduled for release in the near future, but the distributors 21st Century will not be handling any more of my stuff. They really screwed me over the deal and I've had virtually no money from them. *Scalps*, which they handled, has been released in New York and the South but has yet to be released in Los Angeles. It has had bad reviews unfortunately and I am very very upset at the handling of it."

"But I've struck a deal with Ward Pictures to handle my next film, which has a good size budget. It's called *Dinosaur Girl* and is being financed by Woodward, who are backing Mike *Wizard of Hollywood*, another new movie. *The Wizard of Speed and Time*, a feature version of his classic short to the tune of two million dollars."

More news soon on *Dinosaur Girl*

THE ACTIVE ACKER- MONSTER

One thriller fete in *Jitters* *The Wizard of Speed and Time* will be that of Fonzy Adonis, an editor of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* and fantasy film historian supreme. He has recently completed his small role only a few months after his last in Michael Jackson's *Thriller* - did you spot him singing popcorn in the cinema scene? In June, he'll be making a guest appearance in the upcoming production of *Troll*, his 15th screen appearance, believe it or not...

VICIOUS VINYL

River Records best known for producing nostalgic oddball items, have recently issued soundtracks of *Blood Feast* and *Corman's Little Shop of Horrors* and hope to release more in the future. *The Blood Feast* record is actually divided into two, side one being *Blood Feast* and side two being devoted to *29th March*. Much is of course, by Herschell Gordon Lewis himself and is suitably awful though the cover artwork of the cover is more likely to cause Mary Whitehouse a heart attack than the music.

HERSCHELL DAY, USA

February 26th was Herschell Gordon Lewis day at Hollywood Book and Poster Company. Arranger Eric Cullen, still planning to shoot *Blood Feast II*, invited numerous guests who had worked with Lewis to attend. Highlight of the day was a double bill of two rarely seen Lewis films - *Just for the Hell of it* and *She Devil on Wheels*.

PAUL BARTELL LATEST

Paul Bartell is back with a new movie *Not For Publication*, starring Nancy *(Strange Invaders)* Allen and David *(American Werewolf)* Naughton. His last since the delightful *Eating Rascals*, it tells the story of a group of rich society women who live a double life. By day wealthy playgirls, by night scandal sheet journalists working for a rag similar to LA's very own *National Inquirer*. Doubtless as a somewhat comedy by Bartell, it should be a worthy follow-up to *Eating Rascals*. Sadly though his planned project at Universal - an anthology movie based on the 1950s TV show *One Step Beyond* - has been cancelled due to the relative financial failure of *Twilight Zone* - *The Movie*. The good news is that by now Paul should have begun shooting the sequel to *Eating Rascals*, entitled *Blind Ambition*.

SHORT TAKE 2

Wesley Price has soon hit back on the screen as *Dr Phibes*. He has next a story treatment by Paul *(Beast With a Million Eyes)* Clements and Ron Magid and is reportedly delighted with it. Things look promising with 20th Century Fox interested.

PLUTO LIVES

Blatant-faced Michael Berryman, recently reprinted his role as Pluto in *The HBB News Eyes* - *Part Two* and may well be playing the lead in the proposed *Blood Feast II*. In the story he would play one of two characters still living under the power of Fouad Ramses, to be played (hopefully) by Mal Arnold - the original chief of death.

WHO'S WALT TOUCH- STONE?

Sensational at Disney must have finally realized that the key title "A Walt Disney Production" means death to any artist created film that they might screw up with. So first Merch, with the Review of Ron *Happy Sagar* Howard's new film *Splash*, Disney ignores Touchstone films from now on all their more adult pictures will be released under this banner with the more traditional pictures staying under the title of Disney. Splash as a married picture quite naturally contained several brief nude scenes unless you're into such scenes of showing *Barf* Hannah but Disney films, scared as usual, trimmed it at the last minute to get a PG rating. The decision seems to make the company name change a little pointless especially as the instant we'll deserved success of the film is due more to its wit and style than to any internal Disney name change. Maybe when *Baby* their greatest picture, hits the theatres later this year the name Touchstone may have more relevance but mean while, under the Disney banner, *The Black Cauldron* seems released in late summer and *Os* is slated for a summer 1986 release. Hopefully too we will see more pictures of the calibre of *Never Cry Wolf* but after all, a Disney picture is still a Disney by any name.

SHORT TAKE 3

More than 14 months after I first saw its preview *House of the Long Shadows* is still awaiting its US release. Although MGM were planning to shoot it for Halloween last year, it is still along with better pictures like *Scars of the Secret* being warded on a shelf.

NEW WORLD HORRORS

New World productions generally are ignored by the serious student of horror film. With films such as *Galaxy of Terror* and the awful *Styker*, they have brought their bad name upon themselves - not that they could really take all the blame with Roger Corman heading the studio. But all that has changed with Roger's recent departure from the studio and better, more well tailored productions are promised for the future. The new spearhead is headed by an adaptation of Stephen King's short story, *Children of the Corn*, which first appeared in his collection *Night Shift*. A sort of cross between *The Wicker Man* and *Friday the 13th*, the story is low gear King. The fact that the movie is far from good makes the point - by New World's standards it is a quality feature. The real judgement will come soon when John Carpenter's jet project, *The Philadelphia Experiment*, hits the screens. First reports indicate a goody, but only time shall tell...

FRIDAY THE 13th - PART BORE

Oh dear just when you thought it was safe to go back into the movie theatre, along comes a new *Friday the 13th* film to ruin it all. The fourth episode in the adventures of Jason the deformed teen who makes up effects by the never surprising Tom Savini who says it will be the last in the series, as it is subtitled *The Final Chapter*. Given he hadn't heard that preproduction work has already begun on *Part Five*.



The stunning Daryl Hannah (top) is the mermaid Madison in the new romantic comedy *Splash* from Disney. (oppo, Touchstone Films; (below) Alter, *Bikeshed* and *Scalps*: how could you resist Fred Dim Ray's latest film?

SPACE VAMPIRES LIFT OFF

At last *Space Vampires* exists after years of "coming soon" ads in *Variety*. Under the wing of director Tobe Hooper, this tale of galactic necking promises well with effects by John Dykstra. The plot is one you never read: Colin Wilson's *Sea novel*, *Capitaine* like energy draining aliens set loose in London after being brought back from their hibernation in space by an unfortunate crew of explorers. A global *Belshazzar* is, quite naturally, anticipated if the vampires are not caught and destroyed. A good film might help comfort Wilson who received an exceptional offer for the film rights the day after his agent accepted a more modest one.

NIGHT CRAVEN

After high hopes of a major comeback for Wes Craven, things are not all that they should be in the hills with eyes. The new sequel to his finest revive was screened at a special limited viewing for the American Film Market and the general opinion on *The Hills Have Eyes - Part II* was that it looked bad... terrible, even! Of course, it will make money but he is rapidly losing his cult status. Interest in his latest project, *Nightmare on Elm Street* was being dreamed up at the market but the film (young girl dreams of a clawed killer who may or may not be real) will have to be hot to ensure his name selling a film. I still had faith in him after *Swing Thing* but he now has a lot to make up.

SHORT TAKE 4

One film to steer clear of at any cost is the turkey of the Film Market, *Frankenstein's Great Aunt Tillie*. I have never seen a worse fantasy film and, indeed, it is the only movie in my life I have ever walked out of - the sheer physical pain of watching it was too much! You have been warned.

GHOULIES FROM THE MAUSOLEUM

Bobbie Breese is back! The delirious silliness of *Mausoleum* is now in the cast of *Ghoulies*, the new Charles Band film. It promises to be a black comedy about teenagers (who else?) trapped in a house full of spirits and monsters - distributors found the preview reel shown at the Film Market interesting. And, since *Mausoleum* is now available on video in the UK, you lucky folk can take Ms Breese home.

HORROR DEAD? NOT YET

Final interesting news from the American Film Market is the unusual amount of genre films being bargained for. More than 76 such films were on show including *Woodbury at the House of Death*, *Disenfranchise*, *Bikeshed*, *Scalps*, *Splatter University*, *Martyrdom*, *Warrior* and *Sonnet*, *Deathstalker*, *Final Terror*, *Secrets of the Phantom Cave*, *Yat*, *Lost Empire*, *Rowan*, *Through Naked Eyes* and *Children of the Corn*. And that's not even counting promos for *The Philadelphia Experiment*, *Ghoulies*, *Requiem* and *Sword*. If amongst others how many you'll see on UK cinema screens is another question but, legislation permitting, you may catch quite a few on video.

SHORT TAKE 5

Hottest film of the market appeared to be *Reminding the Stone*. Reason you'll hear a lot more about the one so I'll just sign off with my usual warped wishes from the land of dreams and deals.



HEROES OF THE 'B' MOVIES

by ANTHONY TAFE

Rondo Hatton is best remembered for his chilling portrayal of the "Creeper", a deformed brutal killer who menaced his way through the mid 1940's at Universal Pictures. But off screen, Rondo was anything but the monster that he showed as his films.

Rondo Hatton (his real name) was born April 29th 1894 in Rogers Town, Maryland. Contrary to popular belief he was not the handsome young man who turned into a monster in later life but the lesser paid faraway publications would have to believe. From all accounts he was deformed by the disease Acromegaly from an early age and by his late twenties to early thirties he was more or less as he was to be for the rest of his life. He started his career in movies by joining the Aulrey Kennedy studios in Key West. Rondo as a writer and then moved to Hollywood in the early 1930s to become a genre release writer in a local press agency. His first acting break came in late 1933 when Henry King spotted him and cast him in a small role in *Hell's Harbour*. But it was a false start and Rondo wasn't to make another film until 1938.

After a mixed 5 years of pre-war work and hitting the casting agencies, Rondo found work as an extra at 20th Century Fox studios and appeared in two films for there that year: 1938. His unusual appearance caught the eye of many directors who wanted him more as a "presence" than anything else in their films. Rondo didn't care though it meant steady work for him and at least he was a regular on the big screen. He spent most of the 1940s at Fox and enjoyed limited success as an extra. But Rondo's personal life was always painful. A kind, charming and intelligent man, he was stared at in the street and teased to with sadness and often horror by the less understanding members of society.

1944 was a busy year at Universal's fright factory with over the *Sherlock Holmes* series leading into chill-country with *The Scarlet Claw* and *The Pearl of Death*. The latter picture called for a different kind of nemesis for the Baker Street sleuth, a horrifying, bone-crushing giant of a man called the Creeper. Rondo was a natural for the part! Although he had to be built up in height (he was not an especially tall man

and build) he made the role his own and injected feeling into an otherwise "facile" role. At the end of the picture he is killed but Universal (being Universal) would not let the Creeper die yet.

Three more films followed before Rondo made a horror picture again, including the rarely seen serial for Universal *Battle of Ghost City*. Then came *Jungle Captive* (1945) last and most enjoyable in a weak series of three films featuring the "Ace Woman". He portrayed Mocho, the brute and got to rectify some of the films funniest (unintentioned) lines. All was not well at Universal who were in a real financial state at the end of the war and while the studios brewed, Rondo made two more pictures back to back, bringing back to the screen his last friend the Creeper. In the first film, *House of Horrors* he tries to kill himself because of his ugliness but is released by a surgeon played by Martin Raskin, who then uses the Creeper to bump off his critics. A wild film, it is today achieving a minor cult status and deservedly so. This film was followed by the infamous *Brute Man*, which related the story of how the Creeper became what he was.

On February 2nd 1946, Rondo Hatton died from a heart attack due to accelerated growth strain. The disease he had battled for so long had finally killed him and Universal now found themselves with a film on their hands that explored the very thing that killed him. Since they were having due to financial losses they decided to ship off many of their lesser completed features to smaller distribution companies who bought the rights from Universal and *The Brute Man* was an obvious choice. It was sold complete with all advertising materials, to FRC pictures where it received small and spotty distribution. A pitiful film, it deserved little better, though it certainly was not the offensive film to Rondo that it is told to be.

Times changed in the pre-war years of film and Rondo was very much a product screen star of the 1940s. He died and left us with a shadowy hint of stardom, the kind that could only have been in the golden age of Hollywood and he remains a one of a kind screen villain.



Film Credits

- 1939 Hell's Harbour
- 1939 In Old Chicago
- Alexander's Playtime Band
- 1939 Headlock of Nuts Daze
- Captain Fury
- 1940 Chet Hesse
- Moon Over Burma
- Big Guy
- 1942 Cyclone Kid
- Moon and Slingshot
- 1943 Sleepy Lagoon
- Oxbow Incident
- 1944 The Pearl of Death
- Battle of Ghost City (serial)
- Princess and the Pirate
- Johnny Doesn't Live Here Anymore
- 1945 Jungle Captive
- Royal Mounted Rifle Again
- 1946 House of Horrors
- Spider Woman Strikes Back
- The Brute Man

BOOK COLUMN



by DAVID RUSSELL

The usual difficulty with a book column in a fantasy film magazine is the general lack of suitable material to review – witness our competer's reviews of science fiction novels – but this time there is so much available I must apologise for the brevity of the comments. The range of titles too is a hopeful sign of the growing awareness, despite judicial evidence to the contrary, of the horror/fantasy genre in cultural circles.

Our first title, for example, is the sort of project that would have seemed underachieving only a few years ago. Robert W. Rabe Jr and Douglas C. Kern's *The Films of Christopher Lee* (Bantam Press/Bailey Bros & Swinson £15.95) is a wonder of a book, a complete bibliography of Chris Lee together with his comments and reflections of the films in question. Although perhaps a little selfless about his Hammer years, Lee reveals himself as a thoughtful and perceptive critic of his own work and the title can only confirm Lee's frequently expressed opinion that he is not a horror star. It also reveals just how many low budget European films he has wasted his talent in. But that's another story perhaps. An excellent volume and fairly indispensable to any would-be fan of the Lee fan, even at that horrendous price.

Farther more accessible to the average pocket but a more challenging read is Peter Handberg's *The Shape of Rage: The Films of David Cronenberg* (New York Touchstone, about £3). A publication of the Academy of Canadian Cinema, this is a collection of essays on the work of the most controversial of the current crop of respected directors. Certainly the book does not entirely consist of persons of praise for Cronenberg but whatever you may think of his films (and personally I feel he lost direction between

Bad and the recent *Widows* and superb *The Dead Zone*) I think this book is worth your attention. Serious students of film criticism are infrequent in our field but this title shows how successful they can be when applied to a film maker of Cronenberg's vision.

Which brings us nearly to Pascal Martini's *Memo Film* (Edig, 2 rue Racine, Paris 75341 France, 40 francs). Bava's name conjures up a nostalgia vision for old time horror fans but the book shows how much wider he cast his net than simply the horror film sword and sorcery science fiction, thriller, wings and comic strip horrors. The changing face of world cinema has meant the demise of many of the low-budget areas which threw up so many interesting directors (the Roger Corman stable above all) but Italy is still the home of the quick exploitation film. *Memo Film* clones *Noides* no-ops, cannibal movies, etc and this book gives a useful insight into that tradition. You'll have to send to France for this but, if you can read French and appreciate Italian fantasy, I'm sure you'll find it worth the trouble.

Merlin Benkar's *A History of Fears* (Pinto Press, £4.95) you can find even in WH Smiths on the other hand, and even though it is not about fantasy films I urge you to do so. Basically, it is a study of the concerted campaign in the 1950s which led to the banning in the UK of American horror comics (most notable the influential EC line) and that campaign is of direct relevance to all of us faced in 1984 with a similarly misguided and intellectually dishonest campaign against horror in general and horror videos in particular. Just as now the "research methods" of video campaigners is shown to be academically bankrupt (a recent study showed an equal percentage of children enthusiastically watching non-existent films as had recalled the "scariest" to universal press reviewers) so too in those far-off days did the campaigners twist evidence to show the pernicious power of horror comics. An essential read – if only to reveal in the wonderful comic strip reprinted here. An essential warning too: nothing changes and despite the liberation of artistic freedoms over the last couple of decades there are those working every day to deny us the right to see what we will. Be warned – they will win unless we put an equal effort into ensuring that the arts should be as capable of showing horror if required as they are of showing love.

The films of the 1950s were not as culturally suspect as the comics of course but Peter Bakula's *Seeing is Believing* (Pinto Press, £9.95) usually carries as how even the most mainstream examples of American cinema still managed to reflect the tensions and conflicts of a society in transition. Although only a portion of the book deals with fantasy films, there is enough here to provide a very thoughtful read and it is an excellent example of how film criticism can open up to us while new ways in which to see again even the most low budget and seemingly naive movie.

I've had a couple of letters in asking why Stuart Seashell's *Midnight Movie* (Invincible in WH 27) has been released over here with new authors, J. Hobbes and Jonathan Rosenbaum's *Midnight Movie* (Harper & Row, \$9.95). The answer is quite simple despite an identical title and subject matter (and provide that are shown on the midnight crawl like *Rocky Horror Picture Show*), this is a completely different book. But whilst the earlier title is a leisurely stroll through some cinematic oddities, the new book is a descent into a kind of celluloid hell with an unfortunate emphasis on the works of John Waters and even more alarming underground film characters. Of the two books, I would guess that this may be of more value but be prepared to be shocked – thoughtful it may be, subtle it isn't.

Denny Peary's *Cult Movies 2* (Warrior, £8.95) however, is the kind of film book which you could give to just about anyone. If you saw the first *Cult Movies* you'll know what to expect, if not then let me just say it is a useful survey of a whole host of films which Peary reckons are cult favourites: *Satanstoe*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *The First Wives Club*, *Goddard*, *Private in Hanging Rock*, *Sullivan's Travels*, *The Wicker Man* etc. An interesting selection and certainly his comments often arrive at your own viewing of a film but it is debatable how many of his fifty films are actually cult items. I mean *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*?

Moving quickly to fantasies, we have the newly revised *Children of the Night* (\$2.95 plus postage from Derek Jensen, 2454 Village Drive, Prairie Village, Kansas 66202) which immediately returns the title to the small pocket of exceptional fantasy film fascinate like *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Phantom* and *Midnight Maniacs* after too many years away. This issue reviews some of the latest big movies but also, more usefully, takes an overview on 3D movies and splatter films. Excellent design, glossy paper, nice ink and an obvious love of the genre all make me eager for the next issue which will appear only if this one gets enough response. Go to it!

A British horror I've just become aware of is *Creators* (75p plus postage from Nick Heated 147 Rushton Gardens, Clayhill, Wotton Bassett) with a special Edgar Allan Poe issue. Although comic fanatics are thick on the ground there don't seem to be many film ones and it is the sort of venture we ought to encourage. Most of *Neil's* writers will recall the late 1960s when there was a veritable flood of excellent British film reviews and, as a tip to budding writers, it almost certainly from out of the current fanatics that the next generation of *Hulk* and *Star Trek* writers will come. That said *Creators* is not an outstanding gem of work and its reliance on horror stories to fill an issue seems unfortunate but it seems a project well worth keeping an eye on.

Finally we come to a feature (?) which I don't hesitate to recommend to you. David Ferebee's *The Splatter Times* (\$2 plus postage from PO Box 2133, Cookeville, Tenn. 38502) I have the first three issues to hand and am amazed at how professionally produced and interesting they are. Unlike similar US titles like *Gore Gazette* or *Splatter Express* this is a tabloid newspaper size with twelve or so pages an issue crammed with reviews of low budget films, interviews with people like Hershel Gordon Lewis and Bobbie Broeze, features on the Splatter Temporal movies and much more. We are currently attempting to act as UK distributor for the title but, until then, rush your international money orders for a set – you won't regret it if your letter ran more to gore and unusual horror films.

I'm happy to give you an update to my complaints about *Devil Riders: The Avengers* (Holt 26) which, as you may recall, did not include any material on *The New Avengers*. Apparently this omission was due solely to the copyright difficulties between the two shows rather than a decision on Davis's part – *The Avengers* is owned by DMI whilst *The New Avengers* is owned by The Avengers (Film & TV) Enterprises and (the now inactive) I.D.T.C.

I've also had a few letters asking where titles reviewed in the column can be obtained. Well, when I'm not aware of a UK publisher or retailer I will give you the address to write to but anything where mainly a publisher's name is given should be available through any bookshop by ordering or, almost certainly, from those good folk at Partridge World 2, 58 St Giles High Street, London WC2E 9BT (01 379 6042). Enclose SAE with your enquiry and tell them I sent you. Okay?

ANSWER DESK

I have in my possession a copy of *Hells of Horror 25* featuring a Shander comic strip. Can you pin it for me which issue contains the continuation of the storyline, and do you stock copies in your mail order department?
V. Irving, Goring by Sea, Sussex.

Dear Sherr Apelles: Dave has passed your question over to me for answering V, as I'm the one to blame for the following somewhat confusing continuity. Shander appeared in *HoH* 8, 9, 16, 29 and the upcoming issue 30. He has also appeared in *Warrior* 1 to 10, 12 to 16, 18 onwards. However chronologically *HoH* 8 introduced the character as a demon fighting beast! Issues 16 and 23 lead up to his meeting with Van Helsing (scheduled for issue 30), which precedes his meeting with Dracula. I told in our advertisement of *Dracula, Prince of Darkness* in *HoH* 6 *Warrior* 1, 2 and 3 reprint the solo stories from *HoH* 8, 16 and 23, but with issue 4, *Warrior* takes up Shander's struggles after his encounter with Dracula and will elaborate in *Warrior* 23.

All the back issues mentioned of both magazines are available from us (see ad elsewhere) except *HoH* 6 (but the *Dracula/Shander* strip has been reprinted and is currently available on the stands in our *Specials* Special).

Now you know why Dave Reeder didn't want to answer your question! But I'll now hand the column back to him -

I think Tapp's comments in *Answer Desk HoH* 26) are wrong when he credits Harker Ellison with Hugo Awards for his two *Dexter* novels except Terry Doyle, Ransom.

Sorry about that Terry. Yes, you're quite right Ellison won a Writers Guild of America Award for Best Anthology Drama for *Demo With a Glass Head* but no Hugos for the show. Guess we thought he had won so many that a couple of them must have been for his *Dexter* novels!

Can you help me with fan club addresses for Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing? And what ever happened to *Famous Monsters of Filmland*?
John C Smith, Bournemouth

I'm sure I've seen these lying around somewhere but just can't put my hands on them at present. Sorry John, but for now I think your best bet is to drop a line (with SAE) to Colin Cowie and ask him the answer as well as for details of the interesting *Warner International Fan Club* 288 Lonsford Lane, Larnfield, Maidstone, Kent, OX, and do say we sent you.

Famous Monsters is sadly no more. Publisher Jim Warren filed for bankruptcy a couple of years back and the 25 year anniversary issue of *FM* never reached the printer. Final number, therefore is 191.

I've recently come across mention of the *Inner Sanctum* film in an article on Lon Chaney Jr. What can you tell me about them?
Gary Hayworth, Haddenfield

This was a series of six films, all starring Chaney, made by Universal and based on a radio series of the same name. All were introduced by a head in a crystal ball and Chaney was alternately hero and villain in *Calling Dr Death* (1943), *Dead Men's Eyes* (1944), *The Frozen Ghost* (1944), *World Women* (1944), *Phantom of Death* (1945) and *Strange Confession* (1945). There was also a feature by Lew Landers, *Inner Sanctum*, made in 1948 which is not part of the series.

Being there are now plans about to film *The Beastmen* again for the big screen, could you please let me know previous film appearances?
P West, Sutton.



Ah, in early 60s Bob Kane's comic book creation first reached the screen in a Columbia serial, *Batman*, in 1943 with Lewis Wilson as the caped crusader and then after some guest spots on the mid 1940s *Supernatural* daily radio show, he reappeared in another Columbia serial, *Batman and Robin* in 1949 (known on television as *The New Adventures of Batman and Robin*, played by Robert Lowery. There was the famous 120 episode TV series from 1969-71 with Adam West as *Batman* together with Burt the million picture *Batman* in 1966, again with West. Finally he had another TV series (animated) and appeared on the *Super Friends* animated show and created Bob Kane did an annual cartoon pastiche in 1980 *Cartoonists Get and Minute Mouse*.

Were you really shocked when you saw Elsa Lanchester's only genre film was *The Bride of Frankenstein*, in the book columns of *HoH* 27?
Trevor Roberts, Bangor, N. Ireland

I'm relieved to admit I was. Apologies to Mr Lanchester who, of course, later appeared in *The Ghost Goes West* (1938), *Ball, Book and Candle* (1958), *Mary Poppins* (1964), *Blackboard's Ghost* (1967), *Willard* (1971), *Anastasia* (1977), *Terror in the Wax Museum* (1977) and *Die Laughing* (1982). Shame, shame.

I've just returned from a spell in Ecuador and over there I saw John Carpenter's classic slash movie entitled *Marion 13*. Why change the day of the week?
V. Longland, Bakenell

Because V, the unlucky day for Latras is Tuesday 13th not Friday! Simple, isn't it?

ANSWER DESK welcomes your queries on film, TV or written horror! Send your questions (or addendums of information you might like to share with other *HoH* readers) to - *Answer Desk, Hells of Horror*, 3 Lonsford Way, London SE14 6PP.

AFTER THE END.

THE POST APOCALYPSE ACTION MOVIES

by KIM NEWMAN



Mel Gibson stands alone. Writes Danny Peary in his excellent *Cult Movies*, "the first and only film of a genre that could hardly be explored and exploited, with interesting results, by action-oriented filmmakers. It is extremely probable, I believe, that if Australian filmmakers began churning out similar violent, futuristic, car-motorcycle films full of spectacular crashes — films in which the stuntmen are the stars — it could be the start of an international craze to equal that caused by Italian westerns and Chinese kung fu movies a few years back." While the current plague of if-thenso futurist sci-fi flicks proves that Peary was right about the potential popularity of an end of the world action movie genre, he was not entirely accurate in his suggestion that *Mad Max*'s venture into a near future world of anarchy, punk, leather, chrome and violence is without precedent. Quite apart from the film's obvious debt to the *Dirty Harry* (1971)/*Death Wish* (1974) rogue cop/vengeance film in its story of an obsessive lawman who tracks down and wipes out the gang of degenerates who raped and killed his wife and child, *Mad Max* (1979) was nearly the breakthrough movie for a genre that had been developing since the birth of the cinema.

In the 1880s, the branch of literature that was then known as the scientific romance became influenced by the millennialism that always comes about with the renascence of a new century. Despite the complete arbitrariness of the convenient production involved man has put upon the passage of time, the fact that a century is drawing to its close appears to stir up the belief that exceptional events are about to be turned on their head. In earlier times, fanciful thoughts had tended towards the Second Coming, but the rise of Darwinism had brought about a climate of agnosticism which led Victorian science fiction writers to conceive of the Secular Apocalypse, a series of scientifically rationalized Ends of the World (or, at the very least, Complete and Utter Ruinations of Human Civilization). Two of the century fiction gave its readers cause to fear, not the Wrath of God, but a comet on a collision course with the Earth (Camille Flammarion's *Le Fin du Monde/Onega: The Last Days of the World* (1883-4), including Marjorie (H.G. Wells' *The War in the Air* 1908), the fading of the Sun (William Hope Hodgson's *The Night Land* 1912), poison gas from outer space (Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Poison Belt*), the atomic bomb (Wells' *The World Set Free* 1914), or a gonococcal pestilence (John London's *The Scarlet Plague* 1915). After that, World War One, which is what these Apocalypses were really prophesying, was almost a relief.

During the silent era, the cinema lagged behind literature, locked by fundamentalists like D.W. Griffith and Cecil B. DeMille into the early Victorian ideas of the Bible belt. Silent spectacles were only too pleased to present covered versions of mass devastation in religious epics like Griffith's *Intolerance* (1916), DeMille's first *The Ten Commandments* (1923) and Michael Curtiz' *Noah's Ark* (1929), but God-fearing and -worshipping audiences could relish the pagan orgies of crashing temples and smitten multitudes safe in the knowledge that they were too righteous ever to suffer the fate of the Sodomites and Babylonians cheerfully slaughtered in a massacre by megaphone-wielding directorial demagogues in rising battles. The mass attraction in those films, which incidentally became popular all over again with silent audiences during the nuclear-deterrence 1950s, was a combination of spectacular damage and the apocalyptically cata-

Mel Gibson as the most popular and typical post-apocalyptic hero *Mad Max*

going-on that brought down the life of Jehovah in the first place. When Abel Gance came to film Plamondon's *Fin du Monde* in 1935, the concept was explicitly linked to the Judgment of God, and there was much stress on the vivid excesses of doomed humanity in the shadow of doom. For this reason, the film was drastically shortened for release outside traditionally liberal France, and most infant versions have been disowned by the director. The more moral Americans, reeling under the Judgments of Wall Street Crash, Prohibition and the Degenerate, replied with a modern *Flood*, *Deluge* (1932), in which New York is swept away by a tidal wave to make way for a particularly wet three-way love affair.

The first obvious ancestor of the modern post-apocalypse movie is the middle section of William Cameron Menzies' *Things to Come* (1936). In Hollywood, economy-conscious producers took heed of the failure of *Deluge* and vented their urge to destroy the world through the rompages of machine-gun toting mobsters or back from the dead monsters, but H.G. Wells had devastated the planet on print so many times that he was used to it, and rich to put his voice of the End of the Old World on the big screen. The first half of his novel *The Shape of Things to Come* uses a worldwide war to reduce civilization to the ruins out of which the utopian technological city of the future will rise. Set in 1939, the central scenes of the film find Everytown (official London) smashed by aerial bombardment, and populated by plague-ridden swarms perpetually at war with the hell tribes of the home colonies. The ruler is Ralph Richardson as The Boss, a far-coated nihilist bent on rules who rules in a horse-drawn limousine and conducts himself like the ancestor of Isaac Hayes: Duke of New York or *Mad Max*' payhoo Hanoi bikers. Instead of Mel Gibson, the film has Raymond Massey in a black leather outfit, the representative of a futuristic conspiracy that drops him on Everytown to deliver the last draft of *Kazuo's Day the Earth Shook* (1956) warning - make peace or die. *Mad Max* Rocketerism is "the only law in a world gone mad", but Massey's John Cabel is the harbinger of a rule of mercy which will replace the Boss' revolver-wielding tyranny with a suspiciously fascist but amply sensible world state.

...only the beginning

With *World War Two* keeping anyone's appetite for destruction the apocalypse movie went underground, but the war's Big Bang finale provided the science fiction boom of the 1950s with something really easy to worry about. The twin fears of The Bomb and The Communists proved a powerful inspiration for many genres of smoking, radioactive nuke. In *Rocketship X-M* (1956), the first of the *Audible Warning* films, marauder Lessee its Lesson by taking a trip to Mars where the astronauts take a tour of a civilization that has wiped itself out in a nuclear war. The plot was raised in *The Island Earth* (1955), *Dr Who and the Daleks* (1965) and *Space-hunter Adventure in the Forbidden Zone* (1963). More popular is the story about the present day people who travel into a ravaged future Earth, whether deliberately, as in *The Time Machine* (1960) and *The Time Travelers* (1966), or accidentally, as in *World Without End* (1955). Beyond the Time Bamber (1960), and the Planet of the Apes series in which astrophysical aliens from space find themselves in the far future. *Tarzan From the Year 5000* (1958) rings the changes slightly by having a mutated survivor of a nuclear war travel through time to the present in search of viable types to repopulate his world.

The imaginative visions of these atomic apocalypses are limited to a variation on the Sumer Versus Indian conflicts of old-fashioned westerns, in which purebred, Aryan-looking

Good Guys are being threatened by hideously mutated, radioactive, scowling Bad Guys, but are saved when the machine intruder from our world clips in with some good old scientific knowhow and a few strong right hooks to hairy jaws. The hero usually finds an unmarked, beautiful, usually dumb, savage woman to settle down with. It is probably not coincidental that these films sprang up when *Broken Arrow* (1950) and *Apache* (1954) were forcing real westerns to take a more liberal attitude to real Indians. As yet, no one has made a post-apocalyptic *Soldier Blue* (1970) in which peace-loving three-eyed monsters are massacred by intolerant human bangers. However, *Captive Women* (1952) a cheap, land, moderately exciting tale of tribal warfare in what is left of New York in the year 3000 does have the novelty of an ending in which a not-terribly hideous Male (Ron Randel) marries a hubble-bubble Norm girl and unites humanity, and, in *The Last Man on Earth* (1964), the state-brandishing hero (Walter Pidgeon) is captured by the race of vandales who have succeeded humanity and put to death because of the havoc he is wreaking on their peaceful but functioning new society.

The first serious treatment of nuclear warfare in the cinema was Arch Oboler's *Dr. Strangelove* (1963), the bleak little story of an ill-matched group of survivors who are soon whittled down by radiation sickness, murder, and poetic justice to a more manageable Two, the first of many new Adams and Evils to settle down at the End out presumably with the intention of breeding like rabbits. Five is the archetypal Serious Nuke Movie, the direct ancestor of everything from *On the Beach* (1959) through *The War Game* (1966) to *The Day After* (1983), and very boring it is too, although the new feminist version of lone figure walking through rubble- and skeleton-strewn streets have a momentary buzz of horror. *World War Three* (1963), Roger Corman made the Non-Serious Nuke Movie his own province, doubtless because deserted landscapes and dry ice radiation clouds are very cheap. Throwing in *Post Apocalyptic* in a mutant suit ("It's skin looked like rubber," says a character in a canny speech, "but it was hard as steel"). *The Day the World Ended* is less pretentious than *Five*, and was followed up by *Teenage Cannibals* (1958) with Robert Vaughn as the post-apocalyptic mad-up kid discovering the origin of his world, and *The Last Women on Earth* (1963), with Ambrose Carbone and screenwriter Robert Towne arguing over Betty Jones-Moreland.

Falling between the Serious and Non-Serious streams are Albert Zugmuth's hysterically anti-communist *Invasion U.S.A.* (1953), which had the distinction of scolding the parents of Lucille Parsons, and Ronald McDougall's oddly unforgettable *The World, The Flesh and the Devil* (1960) in which Mel Ferrer, Harry Belafonte and Inger Stevens, as the remnants of humanity after a war fought with radioactive gas (I), sort out their racial and sexual prejudices and invent an entirely new kind of family unit. If nothing else, *The World, The Flesh and the Devil* has the best depopulated city footage with Belafonte dragging a child's cart full of canned food through the concrete canyons of early morning New York. Unquestionably the worst of the Nuke Movies is Larry Buchanan's stilted, crime remake of *The Day the World Ended, in the Year 2888* (1968). Most of these films and with a title reading "This is Not The End - This is Only The Beginning", and are distinguished by a dismal view of humanity that suggests there is something to be said for the destruction of mankind after all. Let's face it, who wants to live in a world

The serious approach to nuclear war with *Top Gun* On the Beach and (below) US TV's *The Day After*





populated by descendants of Richard Denshaw and Ian Nelson?

Minor exponent science fiction found the prospect of World War Three as unbearable (or unconsciously) as that they substituted a world-destroying natural disaster or an alien invasion for the madroom cloud in order to present images of the destruction of civilization. In *When Worlds Collide* (1951), *War of the Worlds* (1953), *Earth versus the Flying Saucers* (1956), *The Mysterians* (1960), *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* (1962), and *Day of the Tribble* (1969) the phycraps came tumbling down, tidal waves surge through New York, alien and warlike rampages in Tokyo, London, New York, and humanity descends into savagery with an almost monotonous regularity. These films present a particularly bleak picture of our civil defense measures which are not only unable to deal with the Manian war machines but handle the notting survivors very badly — in *War of the Worlds*, desperately needed medical supplies are pilfered by a mob, and in *The Day the Earth Caught Fire*, Chelsea becomes green the end of the world with a pop party that gets out of hand. "I know, I'm beginning to think that these disasters only bring out the worst in people," says a major character in *Earthquake* (1974) when National Guardsman Marjorie Gornier sees his badge to get local people who used to handle him witherly executed and even attempt to force himself on Victoria Principal. This film may be silly, but the point is well made.

As usual the most affecting images of desolation come from the cheapest, lowest movies: *War of the Worlds* and *The Mysterians* may be fine when it comes to noisy battles, but cheapiequarkies like *Tarant: Earth* (1954), *The Earth Dies Screaming* (1964), *Seize — Invasion Earth 2150 AD* (1965), and *Whose Were All the People Gone?* (1974) unable to affect explosive special effects have a few anasthetizing moments of awe) deeper and the boring B movie dialogue. The second *Dr. Who* film, it is not quite as effectively depressing as the original TV serial, makes particularly good use of bombed London locations to suggest a decayed city of the future. By now the central purpose of the holocaust in these films was evident. For all the atomistic platitudes, the catastrophes of these replays were designed not to put over a message, but to get rid of all the boring people in the world. With heroes and villains alike removed from the gothic trants of civilization, there are no legal excuses to get in the way of antenning, no holds barred, about anti-ops. After the apocalypse, the world becomes the large, solo equivalent of those wide open spaces from towns that need a West End to clean up and make safe for the womenfolk.

How I learned to stop worrying and love the bomb

As the world heaved a collective sigh of relief after the Cuba missile crisis, the movies attitude to the apocalypse became more rampant. In 1962 Ray Milland could sensibly suggest in his exploit tative *Planet in the Year Zero* that Mr. Average Joe American can survive a nuclear war by taking his family into the hills, drinking bottled water, and shooting any leather jacket types who look like troublemakers. The absurd side of all this was obvious, but a stock Stanley Kiefer in *Dr. Strangelove*, or: *How I Learned to Stop*

Worrying and Love the Bomb (1964) to make it work on the screen. After seeing Stan Pickens whooping it up as he rides into oblivion with a hydrogen bomb bucking like a lion between his legs, it was difficult for a while to take the Big Hot Dio seriously. "So long, mom. I'm off to drop the Bomb!" says Tom Lehrer, and GND's straight faced followers only had Sidney Lumet's slightly ironic version of *Strangelove*, *Fail Safe* (1964) to take them over and Peter Watkins' still-shattering *The War Game* came along to restore the balance of terror. This was the era of zero-degree cool and tactical chic and the only nuclear conflict imaginable in *Strangelove*, *Fail Safe* and *The Bedford Incident* (1965) in accident) in Corbett's *Go-as-is*, or: *It Became Necessary to Destroy the World in Order to Save It* (1970) the U.S. President manfully goes on television after a spilled newspaper has killed off everyone over twenty five, and admits to "a simple human error that anyone could have made."

In *Go-as-is*, Corbett gave the hippies the holocaust they were looking for and proceeded to disappoint them with a faded red scene set on the counterculture values. Reversing the conventions of *Planet in the Year Zero*, Corbett has Heller Angels become the new middle class. While all-American football taunts him to looting and rapine, "Frankly boys," says a clerk in a pop talk, "I don't know if you're as good enough to sack El Paso." *Go-as-is* was much hacked about by its distributors, and Corbett was driven to stop directing and set up his own production company, but it remains a familiar view of the end of the World than Richard Lester's growth oriented *The Bad Setting Room* (1968) and sharper in its look at pop art and the nuts than Jim McBride's offbeat semi-underground, partly full *Glen and Glenda* (1971). It is perhaps the first postholocaust action/adventure fun flick, and Corbett would be instrumental in furthering the genre with his productions of *Paul Bartel's Death Race 2000* (1974), a cartoonish, violent, and thrilling tale of gladiatorial combat on Transamerikan freeways, and *Deathport* (1978), the far future template for loose movies like *The New Barbarians* (1982), which has lots of bikes blowing up and strongly shaped performances from heroine Claudia Jennings and villain Richard Lynch.

In 1968 a kind of worldwide apocalypse seemed likely, as a conventional war in South East Asia escalated in pace with student unrest in the western world. The dawning of the Age of Aquarius was greeted in the cinema by two important films. George A. Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* and Franklin J. Schaffner's *Planet of the Apes*. Like Dennis Hopper and Peter Fonda in *Easy Rider* (1969), Duane Jones in one film and Charlton Heston in the other go in search of America. Unfortunately for them, they find it. Romero's film is a masterpiece, the most influential horror movie since *Frankenstein* (1931) and *Psycho* (1960), but, since it was disguised as a cheap exploitation grindhouse story, it was mostly overlooked by critics who played *Planet of the Apes* for its obvious inextricable satire. The film takes its redneck poses and burning bodies from Vietnam news reels, and Romero zanks a grim picture of humanity by having his living characters, like at each other in useless argument, while his dead ones yawn to hear at them in cautious feigning. *Planet of the Apes* is a weird version of the Norme Varian Muter story with hairy-chested Chuck Heston dumped in a future ruled by stiffy clumps. While at overall has worn less well than the cruder Romero films, *Planet of the Apes* finally comes up with the goods with its image of the shattered State of Liberty. The film ends with an anti-nuke howl that must now cause steudently Reaganite Heston some embarrassment. While *Night of the Living Dead* and *Planet of the Apes* are both funnier than they sound, they signified a return to a more serious approach to the apocalypse.



Jerome's victims at the mercy of nature in *Day of the Tribble*. Hope what? (Below) Peter Sellers as Dr. Strangelove plans a worse fate for us



They don't make 'em like that any more ...

is what Charlton Heston mutters to himself as *The Omega Man* (1971) while watching his favourite film *Woodstock* (1970) summing up the brainless apocalyptic-action movies of the mid 1970s: *No Blade of Grass* (1971), *Logan's Run* (1976), *Demolition Alley* (1977), *The Ultimate Warrior* (1979), *A Boy and His Dog* (1979), and a slew of *Planet of the Apes* sequels made the newfangled post-holocaust landscape familiar to audiences who were reeled around about Watergate or the oil crisis. The end of the world was even safe enough for TV, as demonstrated by *Survivors* (the *Logan's Run* spin-off), and Gene Roddenberry's painful attempts to get a post-Trekky series on the air (*Genesis II*, 1979, *Planet Earth*, 1979, *Strange New World*, 1979). The films had decent budgets, and so they could afford to come up with impressively devastated cities (the suburbanian stock exchange of 1970's *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*, the corporate-sterile L.A. of *The Omega Man*, the ivy-covered Washington monuments of *Logan's Run*), but they all cheapen interesting source novels into warts-between-ecology-conscious hippie communes and contaminated violence freaks. Roger Zelazny's *Demolition Alley* has a Hell's Angel hero who "looks at the world through crisp coloured glasses" and made like a badtempered holdover from a better movie but, in Jack Smight's droopy film, he becomes Jan-Michael Vincent, a blue-eyed, clean-cut air force officer whose blow-dried hair is unaffected by fallout.

The Omega Man is a vampire-less remake of Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* (which had been *The Last Man in the World*) that has a great opening with Heston straphane gunning apes and hiding out against the world in his luxury penthouse, but goes bad with the introduction of a multi-racial circle for whom Heston finally succumbs himself. *The Ultimate Warrior* and *A Boy and His Dog* are tougher, in the first, survivorist Max Van Sydow tells her-for-hire Yul Brynner that if he has the choice between saving the girl or a packet of seeds he should stick with the seeds, and in the second, the hero leads his girlfriend to a telepathic dog who sticks by him as he wanders through America buried under twenty feet of sludge. Even these ratty ones, which borrow their ideas from spaghetti westerns and cycle-drama movies like *Angels Hard As They Come* (1972), are not free from poetic and love platitudes that clog the rest of the mainstream end of the world movies. The Bomb wipes out the straightjacketed rednecked get cleaned in the etheroids, and the future belongs to the Beautiful People. If there was any vitality left in the genre, it would have to come not from Hollywood glosses but from reggie staples like *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977), which would have been the first post-apocalyptic western, only Wax Geyser couldn't afford to depict the breakdown of society as it stands as the violence of the backwoods massacre movies with a bunch of Norms fighting back when the dream-swallowing Muties attack them. With *The Hills Have Eyes* and Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* (1978) the horror movie took the apocalypse about as far as it could, and the world was ready for an avenger in black leather to pull it to rights.

(Top) Pre-production art for *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*, typical post-apocalyptic travelling scenery; from *Demolition Alley*, (below) Claude Jennings effects her own welcome to the holocaust in *Deathport*

We're going to give them back their heroes

In *Mad Max*, a post-holocaust police chief tells his Number One man, "There are no heroes any more... well, we're going to give them back their heroes." The vaguely liberal, still-catastrophic films had emasculated their Chuck Nelsons, but the flourishing speckle-eyed action film needed colorful, larger-than-life Marvel Comics style characters to strut their stuff in the ruins. Possibly the first of the heroes is Harry Crown (Richard Harris) as John Frankenheimer's bald **88 and 44/100% Dead**: the flier who is called into a futuristic American city run by gangsters to deal with Marty "Claw" Zuckerman (the incomparable Chuck Connors), a hitman who replaces his missing hand with snap-on implements that range from a champagne-cork popper to a machine gun. He was followed by Walter Hill's Street gang in *The Warriors* (1979), a bunch who define themselves solely by the mythic types (cowboy, indian, Zulu warrior) whose costumes they ape. Mel Gibson's Dirty Harry cum Man Who Shot Liberty Valance in the *Mad Max* films, and Kurt Russell's Clint Eastwood-cum-long Snake Pliskens in John Carpenter's *Escape From New York* (1981).

Since *Mad Max* is only the law in a world gone mad, the film's poster insists that we "Join his out there." Although the film can be cited as the inspiration for the current craze, it has several severe problems. It opens with a dynamic chase featuring spectacular stunts and razor-sharp editing, as the cops tackle an insane killer on the old Ansett Road "It's a fast rejected suicide machine," screams The Night rider just before he goes up in a massive explosion. Unfortunately, *Mad Max*'s first impression is the strongest — not only does the rest of the film fail to come up with a villain to equal The Night rider, but none of its subsequent action scenes are quite as exciting as its first. Indeed, there is a particularly soggy stretch in the middle of the film when Max quits the force for a self-focus dyke with his wife and child. The Night rider's violent gang kill them and maddened Max is seen back on the road in his Interceptor Vehicle on the vengeance trail, but the damage has been done and the story limps along to its sadistic punchline. Max cuffs a minor thug to a wreck and tells him to save his foot off or perish in the explosion without accepting the split of the opening sequence. Besides, the film was made cheaply in horrendous conditions; director George Miller had to rebuff the Australian cast with bland, mid-Atlantic voices and was never really satisfied with the finished product, which is why he leaped at the opportunity, when the movie became an international success to make a sequel and do everything right.

By the time of *Mad Max 2*, civilization has decayed even further. The police force no longer exists, and Max roams the deserts in his battered Interceptor, accompanied by a mangy dog and a loopy satogiro captain (Bruce Spence in long johns, Richterian helmet, and sunflower button-down). An old timer narrates the legend of the Road Warrior who thrives in with the hippie good guys against the punk/monster villains in order to clear the way for the reestablishment of civilization. While the first film presented Max as a rogue cop, *Mad Max 2* has him as the kind of doomed western hero John Wayne plays in *The*



(Top) The road warrior's dynamic double bill
(Below) Harrison and Warrior Horde from
Mad Max 2

STANLEY KUBRICK'S

CLOCKWORK ORANGE



Serenity (1956) and *The Man Who Shot Liberty Bells*, the man of action who is prepared upon to help lesser mortals destroy the only world he is capable of living in. Like Wayne, Mad Max finally disappears into desert obscurity. The sequel is actually a ninety-minute action sequence, which rather cramps the style of several intriguing supporting characters who are introduced and then brushed off. But Miller handles the whole thing with the verve of the last twenty minutes of *Mad Max*. *Mad Max 2* was retitled *The Road Warrior* in the United States, the one territory where the last film flopped, and served to establish Miller as a director of note (his segment of *The Twilight Zone* 1983 is worth the rest of the movie put together), Gibson as an international star, and the futuristic action/adventure as the genre favourite of the month.

On the streets

The key ingredients of the post-holocaust action movie are weird costumes and ultra-violence. Stanley Kubrick proved in *A Clockwork Orange* that the cinema could have these without needing an expensive-to-simulate nuclear war. In Kubrick's version of Anthony Burgess' novel, the future has become hell through simple deterioration. With inner city decay and a rising crime rate, it is not hard to envisage the kind of near future world in which Alex (Malcolm McDowell), a chug in a white boiler suit, bowler hat, and eye make up, can lead his gang of thugs through a desecrated, violent London. The closest thing about *A Clockwork Orange* quite apart from the very dubious morality of its ambiguously anti-violence message, is that most of it was shot on authentic 1950s locations. "We are the future," declares the leader of the pack in *Class of 1999* (1982), "and nothing can stop us." Recently, the movie has turned away from the futuristic consequences and begun to linger over the present-day side of violence which will eventually lead to the honors of *Mad Max* or *Escape From New York*, unless the reactionary heroes of *The Exterminator* (1980) or *Class of 1984* get their way and drive the scum off our streets with flamethrowers and machineguns. These are the nightmarish backlist films, and, personally, I find their subliminal more frightening than the problem.

The most common kind of future society in the cinema is a variation on ancient Rome, in which the bloodlust of the masses is stoked by state-sponsored gladiatorial sports. In *Le Decima Vittoria/The Tenth Victim* (1965), private citizens are licensed to join the Hunt and Ursula Andress swims around a gap art Rome in search of Marcello Mastroianni, the tenth victim, who will win her untold wealth and fame and the star role in a television commercial for Ming tea. The Petrie film has a funny premise (from a Robert Shickley short story), and plenty of suave bits of 1960s futurism (an 'arrogant' pinball table, a first edition *Flesh Gordon*, and *Andreas' Bullitt* firing brassiere), but falls apart in the finale, which has all the characters jump around the countryside popping off harmless shots at each other in lieu of an actual ending. *Rollerball* (1975) does much to popularise the black leather sad-chrome-stade outfits that have become essential dress for future heroes, but its condemnation of a colourless world where the only excitement comes from an extremely violent motorcycle/roller derby/hockey/hockey/football sport is somewhat compromised by the fact that it is a colourless film where only excitement comes

Drong of the future: Malcolm McDowell, in Kubrick's bleak vision of the anti-hero *A Clockwork Orange*



from the Robert Rodriguez sequels. Recently, *La Pira du Danger* (The Piece of Pork) (1983), from another Sheskey story, proposes a TV game show in which the contestants have to stay alive for four hours while letters track him down. Despite Michel Piccoli's authentically ghostly impersonation of a Bruce Forsyth-type game show host ("and you have an unusual hobby?" he asks one of the psychos who has volunteered to kill the hero), the film suffers from the fact that its action sequences are no ordinary that any sadistic elite once would prefer to switch over to some old Hanna-Barbera cartoons instead. French television has a worldwide reputation for its dub respectability as the makers of *La Pira du Danger*, unfamiliar with the horrors of American and British cult shows, can perhaps be excused from missing Sheskey's satirical point and making a dead straight, dead boring film of his witty, padded story.

The most serious of the future apocalyptic horrors comes from downstream: Peter Watkins, who has world war replaced by a single combat in *The Peace Game/The Gladiators* (1988), and the National Guard hunting down hippie radicals for the practice in *Paranormal Park* (1970). Watkins takes documentaries overstate their case habitually. *Paranormal Park* ends with the offscreen voice of Watkins shouting at the top of his voice that life is unfair, but remains genuinely horrifying. Both these visions have had some influence with *The Peace Game* reworked for American TV as *The Challenge* (1978) in which Dennis McGavin and Mike settle World War II between them, and *Paranormal Park* providing the inspiration for the terrible *Turkey Shoot* (1982), a kind Australian exploitation with camp commentators hunting political prisoners Steve Rainbolt and Olivia Hussey through the outback. Explosive crossbow loth, a Neanderthal man, questlines of ketchup and Michael Craig at an Establishment villain called Thatcher are vividly involved.

The punk explosion of 1977, which had been sort of anticipated by *A Clockwork Orange*, emphasized that the horror's future of unemployment, misery, no-hopes and of worse-worst consumer and ultra-violence was already with us. There were a few post-apocalyptic pics, but only Derek Jarman's *Jubilee* (1987) attempts to depict the apocalypse that The Sex Pistols swore was about to happen. A time-tripping Elizabeth I (Jenny Runacre) and her alchemical advisor, Dr. Dee (Richard O'Brien) take a tour of a post-bombing London encountering many oddball characters, and lots of horrific, pram burning, barbed wire, lightbulb walking, sickeningly violent imagery. *Jubilee* is a heroic, bad-mannered adaptation of Michael Moorcock's *Romances of Energy*, with a few startling performances from Runacre, Urie Mill, and Orlando to make up for embarrassingly amateurish ones from Adam Ant, Toyah, and Jordan (note without comment: very few people in the cast of *Jubilee* seemed to use their real names). Rained London made a comeback as the setting for Russi Targui's *The Gormless Gormless* (1978) and the very curious *Memoria of a Survivor* (1983), but by now there is depressingly little to distinguish these backdrops from the locations for documentary-style, serious contemporary dramas like Mike Leigh's *Meatime* (1983).

In America, the urban decay horror movie grew out of the Charles Bronson/Clint Eastwood action film: both actors were considered by John Carpenter for the role of Snake Pliskien in *Star Wars*.

And still they come. Stryker took Survival Zone and (below) 1918. After the Fall of New York

came from New York before he settled on his chaperon band, Kurt Russell. In 1987 Manhattan is walled off as a maximum security prison, and police chief Las Van Cleef has to invent back robbing WW II hero Pliskien to lead out President Donald Pleasence, who has crashed in the middle of the Big Apple. Carpenter evokes his plot with brook, economical spades that promise a high-energy, satirical adventure but once all the fun characters (Ernest Borgnine as a motley chicken-throwing cabler, Harry Dean Stanton as the owner of an oil well as the public library, and base Hayes as the Duke of New York) have been introduced and various race agents (like his in motion) the film runs out of gas and degenerates into a listless series of battles. Nevertheless, the film's scary setting—with assured heads in parking meters, a Clock Fall O Nuts that lives up to its name, and a transvestite news sipping "Everyone's Gonna Go New York"—is interesting enough to make one regret the figures in sci-fi and deconstruction.

The most elaborate depiction yet of an American city on the brink comes unfortunately in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982), a film that is annoying precisely because the meticulously detailed, cluttered background completely obscures the upstart story, which means that the strong plot and sly humour of Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* get lost and Scott's yellow fog, punk deviants, Hong Kong with acid rain street scenes, advertising jingles and intensely symbolic blurring doves. Still, Harrison Ford is in a trench coat, Sean Young is fast, and Rutger Hauer with dead hair are at least convincingly artificial inhabitants of Scott's rainy vision. A similarly deadbeat New York is found in the Harry Cameron segment of the animated *Heavy Metal* (1983), a skit on *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) and *Test Drive* (1978) in which Canyon the voice of Richard Romanus drives his cab through a city of *Metek* suggests the best cops money can buy and incredibly available women. Recent New-futures include the technological playground of John Badham's *Blue Thunder* (1982), in which Ray Schender drives his hotwired muscles into skyscrapers and so had with the innocent bystanders and Francis Coppola's *Runaway Train* (1983), a pessimistic poetic look at the flag end of the gang fighters of his *The Outsiders* (1983).

Of course it fell to the Italians to make the ultimate nihil of the genre. Enzo G. Castellari's 1980 *I Guerrieri del Bronzo/Bronze Warriors* (1982), an unashamed blend of *The Warriors* and *Escape From New York* which takes poetic justice to its logical conclusion by steering back all the baroque stylized, corks Walter Hill and Carpenter lifted from spaghetti-westerns in the first place—a Viking funeral complete with soaring music and terrible close-up of the Hefe Angels extra, and a finalist display of blind groping, gouging, slaking, strangling, and mutilating weapons. Castellari (best known as the actor who played Mussolini in *Wings of War*, 1968) is a pedestrian director, but the assemblage of off-the-wall supporting characters makes *Bronze Warriors* value for money. In addition to Yli Manno as a renegade cop with a fine in neo-Shakespearean rant ("let the earth have no survivors this day, tomorrow"), the Bronx is populated by a tap-dancing Broadway dancer with deadly swordsmanship, 1930s gangsters, a vampire, and an alien slithering the Wicked Queen from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* (1938). It was followed up with Castellari's indifferent *Bronze Warriors 4* (1983), Sergio Martino's 2000 *Supra le Capote di New York/2000 After the Fall of New York* (1983), Julius Hamann's *Barbarians 2000* (1983), and Uncle Lucio Fulci's 2003 AD *I Centurioni del Futuro/2003 AD: Centurians of the Future* (1983). These films tend to toggle down-on-the-luck Americans like Fred Williamson and Henry Silva, alongside pseudonymous Italian renegades like Mark Gregory and Timothy West.



After a nuclear war.. the battle for survival begins...



DEALERS IN DEATH... EXTERMINATORS OF THE 21st CENTURY



THE NEW BARBARIANS

TIMOTHY BRYNT-FRED WILLIAMSON-GEORGE EASTMAN-RINA KANAKIS-THOMAS MOORE

Hell for leather

The *Mad Max* films borrow a lot of their hard-wearing, cybernetic attitude and overloud soundtrack engine noise from the perennially popular bike gang/hot rod rebel cycle. The genre got a kick start in 1954 with Marlon Brando as a leather-jacketed existentialist in *The Wild One* (when asked "what are you rebelling against?", he replies "what have you got?") and was responsible for such important works of art as *Harold Krumpholtz* (1961) and *Dragstrip Heat* (1966). After a disappointing spell in the early 1960s when Franka Potente got tomorrow's bad name by going gothic, looking neat having beach parties and laughing over Annette Bening. Roger Corran revived the cycle. He got praise with *The Wild Angels*, a memorable bit of gas-burning, nihilism with an all-time great cast that includes Peter Fonda, Nancy Sinatra, Gayle Hunnicut, Michael J. Pollard, Dick Miller, and Bruce Dern as "Loser". As in *Gas-wares*, Corran shows a gang of drop outs who set up a society more rigid and repressive (Fonda is addressed as Mr. President) by his followers than the one they are escaping from. The real-life *Wild Angels* chapter who appeared as extras in the film were unsure whether to sue Corran or kill him, but nothing came of either threat, and his New World company later produced similar bikeapocalypse epics *Angels in the Heart* (1977), *Bury My An Angel* (1982) and *Angels Hard As They Come* (1987).

Charles Hallak, in *The Omega Men*, pioneered the use of a high-power hog as a means of getting around after the holocaust, and the Harley-Davidson was previously taken up by David Carradine in *Deathpost* (where the perfectly ordinary bikes are inevitably referred to as "Death Machines") before the *Mad Max* films made burning rubber as well a part of the aftermath of civilization as radioactive rednecks and only the beginning, and titles George A. Romero wrote a particularly nasty gang of future bikers, led by Tim Severn, into the *School of Dances of the Dead*, but he then reformed them and reused the props for *Knightriders* (1981) in which a cycle gang reinventes Arthurian codes of chivalry and set up one of the few viable alternative communities in the cinema that one would even consider living in. *Mad Max 2* makes petrol the currency for the future, and Harley Collette *Battletruck* (1981) deals with the lust for gas and the overthrow of a tyrannical tyrant who rules the road with his fiery liveries. One gets the feeling that there will be a lot of similar tales, as witness the Filipino *Mad Max* imitation, *Stroker* (1983) - "the odds are a million to one, and *Stroker*'s the best!"

Erno G. Castellani struck back with *I Have Barbari/The New Barbarians* (1983), the high spot of which is as an ad lib, "once you've survived the holocaust, you've got to be tough!" In 2019 the survivors are reduced to dressing up in shaggy leather capes and driving their battered run-around buggies around the Cretaceous rubbish dump. The baddest are a group of teen-aid gay bikers called The Templars, who believe in finishing off what World War Three started by killing everyone who is left before committing suicide, and just about the only remarkable aspect of the movie is that the heroine doesn't get raped (but she does die). Amid the bonfire of the exploding bikers, severed heads, flying stomachs, and bad acting there is one funny line, which has a dispirited Templar ripping up a Bible and sneering "Baaaaa! That's what started this whole apocalypse!"

It takes cheapies like *The New Barbarians* (top) borrowed heavily from such modern classics as John Carpenter's *Escape From New York* (below).



1990 THE BRONX WARRIORS



Spacehunter: Adventures in the Forbidden Zone (1983) and **Metastorm: The Destruction of Jaxxon-Syn** (1983) both in 3-D, take the **Mad Max 2** biker/western formula and sell it on other planets. **Spacehunter** has Peter Struss as a grizzled old bounty hunter and Nikki Ringwald as a hapless teenboy trying to rescue three white women from alien Indians, while **Metastorm** is about a sheriff trying to stop the villain who is stirring up an apocalyptic war and a prospector's daughter after the prospector who shot down her old man. Both films dress their hackneyed stories up with heady triavid effects, more or less imaginative mutant characters, and garish heap sculpture vehicles and are differentiated only by the fact that **Lamont Johnson's Spacehunter** is cheating trash, while **Charles Band's Metastorm** is real rubbish. Incidentally all four titles are misremembered: and **Jaxxon-Syn** doesn't get destroyed. Band had already used one 3-D ripoff in **Parasite** (1981) an **Alien**-spired monster epic set in a **Mad Max**ish punk future, and should have learned his lesson by now.

The End

The **Mad Max** films are fun, but perhaps the concept of the nuclear annihilation of humanity is becoming too real to be the subject of pure entertainment movies. Nothing seems more tactless now than the **After The Bomb** forays of callous flesh like **Destruction Alley** or **Paras** or the **Year Zero** and with the proliferation of atomic weapons and CND-inspired debate about their possible use, the disturbing undercurrents of the 'last' apocalyptic movie have been coming to the surface. John Badham's **War Games** (1983) is a Daringish fable about technological innocence, but as view of a Terminator machine that might or might not up and decide to wipe the slate clean on its own incomprehensible whim is still unsettling. But the most up to the minute ruler horror film, **The Day After** (1983) and **Testament** (1983), dispense entirely with the gungie showmanship of most commercial Hollywood movies and treat their subjects with chilling seriousness. Neither film is far from the soap opera logic of suburban life as seen on American television, but they both present the breakdown of a familiar world with an uncommonly favorable complexion.

In both films the Bomb drops, and the survivors are not their who started it, for alone who was. Nicholas Meyer's **The Day After** is a bigger movie with more recognizable actors (Jason Robards, John Lithgow, Jodie Williams, Jeff East) and more lurid horrors (everyone goes bald and sprouts feline radiation scars), but Lynne Littman's **Testament**, which concentrates on a suburban Mom played by Oscar nominated Jane Alexander, is more viscerally disturbing. **The Day After** goes into the details of instant immolation, impossibly crowded hospitals, organs of disease and glowing ruins, but **Testament** merely deals with loss, as the heroine loses her husband (William Devane) in the blast, and her children one by one thereafter. It isn't easy to forget Alexander calmly cooing her thirteen-year-old daughter into a makeshift crib, and in appointed answer to the action packed period gridding of **Mad Max 2**, the only conceivable use for assault in the post-holocaust world of **Testament** is to kill to win by carbon monoxide poisoning.

Images from the new wave of apocalyptic movies: 1996, 2019, **Rome 2033** and (below) **Metastorm**.





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STATESIDE SHOCKER

by RANDY PALMER



Earlier this year I received a letter in the mail which read in part:

Dear Randy:

I am sorry to hear to tell you that your friend Paul is no longer with us. He died July 10 last year after being totally paralyzed for months.

I was upset. Jackie Blumfeld

I was shocked and distressed to learn of Paul Blumfeld's death. I had first communicated with Blumfeld in 1964, and for nearly twenty years we maintained a gossamer steady exchange of correspondence. To know that he wasn't there any more, out in Topanga Canyon, California, was as I said, disturbing.

But what disturbs me most, when I think of it is that so many fans of the Friday film have no idea who Paul was, or what his contributions were to our genre.

Paul Blumfeld first became involved with motion pictures when he agreed to tackle a particular task in Roger Corman's first science-fiction feature *The Beast With A Million Eyes*. If you've in fact seen that picture, you might legitimately have a desire to ask: "You mean they actually paid people to work as that movie?" It's generally agreed that the best thing about that 1955 effort is probably the title—but if you have seen the film and been able to keep awake until the very end, you've seen some of Paul Blumfeld's best work.

Paul Blumfeld made monsters for the movies. His *Beast* was his first but certainly not his last. But, as Paul once told me, the monster seen in the last reel of *The Beast With A Million Eyes* was actually the alien of *The Beast*, which had no physical being. It used a being from another star system to pilot its ship, but that fact doesn't come across very well in the script.

The creature was an adaptation, and he was quite capable of doing a lot more than he was allowed to do in the film. He was about eighteen inches high—built to the same scale as King Kong. Unfortunately, all of his scenes were shot in about ten minutes, with the wrong camera angles and everything. But it's just one of those things which happen on a low-budget picture.

Indeed it was. Similar problems plagued Paul on many of his subsequent features, from *It Conquered The World* to *Invasion of the Saucer Men* (known as *Invasion of the Hell Creatures* in Britain). But such was the climate of film production in the 1950s. Monster scenes were strictly low-budget affairs back then (and for most part they remained so until *The Beast* was changed with things in 1973).

The Day The World Ended was the title of another early Roger Corman feature about a group of survivors of World War Three who are menaced by deadly gangsters, deading resources, creeping naked on, and a psychotic monster.

A vampiric monster? That's right. I once brought up that aspect of the film and Paul commented that was an interesting facet of the story. The three-eyed alien, mutant was actually supposed to be actress Lori Nelson's boyfriend, who had become mutated into this horrible creature by radiation. Of course, she wasn't aware of that.

(Top) After the power (or make-up) died, it is only the picture that never saw the light.
(Below) A scene never shown from *Invasion of the Saucer Men*.

Because the script required actual interaction between the mutant and members of the cast, Paul was required to build big this time. He constructed a full-sized suit to match his own build, and played the monstrous role himself.

"Actually, I designed the mutant on the basis of how such a creature might evolve as the result of atomic explosions," Paul said. "Jay Russell, who wrote the script, managed to incorporate that idea into the story."

Russell also scripted the next picture Paul worked on, **It Conquered The World**. The film starred Peter Graves, Beverly Garland and Lee Van Cleef and was directed by Cormor. Russell's story about an invader from the planet Venus was shown to Paul, who suggested the design for the monster be based on what was then (1956) known about the physiognomy of Venus.

"The writer wanted some kind of creature that was pretty unrecognizable," Paul recalled, "and at that time the belief about Venus was that it was hot, humid, and not conducive to animal life. But since plant life might exist there, I felt the design should be based around that. I chose a mushroom as a starting point because some mushrooms are poisonous right here on Earth. Imagine what an alien mushroom would be like!"

In the original script, the creature was not supposed to move around at all; it was to sit in a rack at a desk and conduct its dirty business from there. That's not the way things ended up in the final film, however.

Roger Corman decided we were going to have to bring the creature out of the cave in order to keep on schedule," Paul told me. "Someone had forgotten to order generators to power the lights to illuminate the inside of the cave! So there was no choice but to have the Venusian mushroom exit the cave, because it was getting later in the day, the sun was setting, the shadows were falling, and even if the photographer was using Tri-X film, he was still going to have difficulty. It became a question of doing the fastest thing you could as quickly as you could. Fortunately, I'd constructed the creature with castles all the underside, and that became her walking gear, and that's how she moved! I operated her the best way I could but she was clumsy, and she looks clumsy in the movie. It was just one of those things on a low-budget movie!"

Things went a lot smoother on Paul's next assignment, **The She Creature**. The idea was not quite as subtle and fully enclosed. It quickly became Blanditt's most famous creation.

"The **She Creature** ended up the most imaginative of any creatures ever created for American International's pictures," Paul commented. "She was well designed. She could eat, she could drink, she could borrow a cigarette from you, inhale it and blow smoke out of her nose. In spite of how clumsy her awkward appearance to look, she could reach out and pluck a headcrust from your pocket. Those were some of the things I built into her to make her more lifelike."

As always, time and money constraints interfered with the final product.

"The director was in too much of a hurry," said Paul. "The cell he'd have staged and planned around, but when you see it on film it's just dragging along behind her. I also had no opportunity to operate **The She Creature's** 'lunch hooks,' which were the claws surrounding a cavity in her abdomen. The idea was that when **The She Creature** embraced somebody and drew them in close, her 'lunch hooks' would sink into the victim's body. This wasn't due to any time constraints, though. When I first showed up on the stage and had a chance to talk to the director, he decided not to use that particular effect in the film. He thought it was too horrible."

Because Paul had built extra qualities into **The She Creature** costume, it turned out to be long-lasting when anything else he had constructed. American International decided, in

order to save some money, to re-use the **She Creature** costume on other occasions. It next appeared in the company's 1957 picture, **Voodoo Women**.

"The producers were determined to make **Voodoo Women** in record time," Paul remembered. "and so consequently, as the result of some conferences in their Hollywood office, we agreed I would slip down **The She Creature** to make the zombie body, and a make-up man named Harry Thomas would make the head. And as usual, I would be inside the suit."

Several years later AP called upon Paul to re-use **The She Creature** once again, this time for a 'gag' appearance in a haunted house spoof called **The Ghost of Dragnet Hollow**. It was the final time Paul's favorite creature made a film appearance.

Paul also created a variety of oversized props — such as a giant telephone, enormous pencils, and the like — for AP's **Attack of the Puppet People**. For the same company's **Attacking General Mas**, he was required to do just the opposite, constructing miniature objects to make a normal sized man appear gigantic. He also created make-ups for **Earth Versus The Spider**, **Not Of This Earth**, **The Cat Girl** and others. His last two major assignments were for **Invasion of the Saucermen** and **Hi! The Tenor From Beyond Space**.

Saucermen started out as a straight science-fiction film, said Paul. "Then, about one week after production started, everybody was washing the rushes and we noticed it was just so awkward! So then it just sort of collapsed into a comedy."

Paul sculpted several costumes for the picture, which were worn by dwarves. One fully-articulated suit was worn by Paul himself but, as in the case with **The She Creature**, many of the monster's attributes were never seen in the final product.

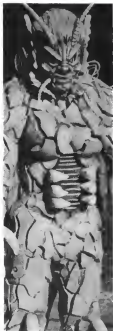
"The eyeballs on the Martian heads could look around if somebody sneezed, for example. The eye could whip right round and look at him! About the closest I got to using some of the better effects on that picture was when the disembodied head crawls across the pavement and punctures a car's tires with its needle-like fingernails."

After creating another full-body suit for **Hi! The Tenor From Beyond Space** (a United Artists picture and a good one) Paul designed some special effects to be used in other films such as **Goleth and the Dragon**, **Jack the Giant Killer**, and such unrealized projects as **State-File and Year 2000**. At the dawn of the 1960s he and associate Bob Burns got together and created **Fantastic Monsters of the Film**, a magazine devoted to coverage of horror and fantasy films, much like **Famous Monsters**, but devoting more space to behind-the-scenes "stories" than **FM** did.

After **Fantastic Monsters** had run for a while, Paul retired from the hectic and hectic of the film community and lived quietly with his wife Jackie in Topanga. In one of his letters to me, Paul joked, "You know I'm certainly not **The Man of a Thousand Faces**. I guess I'm the Man with No Face!"

For posterity, though, I'd rather remember him as **The Man with a Million Faces**. Wouldn't you?

Another low-budget masterpiece (top) **The She Creature** with (below) an example of the excellent monster suit and power of the home image for **Hi! The Tenor From Beyond Space**.



MUTANT

Forget the sheer spectacle of *The Day After*, or the angry railing *Testament*, or West Germany's *Das Schicksal*. Forget in fact the whole switchback to film noir's little-life panic about *The Bomb* — *On The Beach* and all of that. Peter Watkins told it like it really will be in *The Wer Game* — so much so it was immediately banned by the BBC in 1966. The is-it-really, for such as they are, don't show the full of it, just as TV news footage of air crashes never depicts the bodies out in hell by their seatbelts, not to mention the add deprecation.

The film is speculation because there is no answer to a nuclear holocaust. Michael Heseltine can talk himself into — as he did after *The Day After* — but he had no answer. It's not enough to say nuclear, folks. Money's at charge, or more like the Granddads in the White House and the Kremlin.

Doesn't our war-investor technique that a nuclear strike will simply melt our bones, by our bells and separate fresh from bone, blood from insur, faster than Jack the Ripper on fast forward. No, our elected representatives haven't even learned the message, however amplified from *The Wer Game*, of *Wer Games*. That the only way to win the nuclear showdown is not to play the game.

But they do and therefore bring about a more urgent problem that is happening here and now. All around us. The subject of nuclear and other toxic chemical wastes and their poisonous effects on people and environments. Now country is the world has headlined horror stories of the illegal dumping and toxic leakage almost on a daily basis.

We're killing ourselves while waiting for The Bomb...

And such is the premise of *Mutant*.

The place: Goodland, an ill-served rural ghost town in the Southern stretches of America. Typical of the area: The tangled beauty of giant magnolia trees, blossoming crape myrtles and overgrown cedar bushes fail to disguise the dilapidated condition of its rambling Victorian houses. Over there on Main Street, just across from the town depot is the bank, the bar, the sheriff's office and the town stores. At the other end of the street is the petrol station.

Like most of the windows in town, the gas station is deserted.

Enter Josh Cameron and his younger brother, Mike. Their vacation in the country wife has come to a rapid end when their car was waylaid by a tribe of local yokels. They make their way into Goodland looking for help.

Instead they find a corpse, just about recognizable as human — and hideously maimed. The locals aren't very helpful. Next morning, Mike has disappeared. As he searches for him, Josh witnesses strange happenings about behind Goodland's sleepy facade. Something terrible is happening in town — and to the townsfolk. Something chemical.

Rather like *Wer Games*, the film starts from a pair of young writers. When they wrote it, Michael Jones and John C. Kruze were mid-school clerks at the MGM studios (like Jack Nicholson had been a long, long time ago). "We simply decided there was no way to do in life then rush around delivering other people's scripts," says Mike. "So, in between daily deliveries and almost every night, we collaborated on a movie idea based on newspaper stories we kept reading."

"We pitched the script intensely for over a year with no luck," adds Chris. "No one wanted to look at a script by two unknown mail clerks with a friend next to."

Igo is Igo Kantor who, as befits his name, used to be a movie editor at Columbia Pictures and its TV wing. He formed his own company, Synchro-film, in 1966, did post-production work on 200 movies including Nicholson's best, *Easy Rider* and *Five Easy Pieces*. "It's excellent training, you learn everything about film making because you're responsible for this finished product. By

1971, Kantor produced his first film, *Jud*, and has since produced everything from Jesse Fonda's *F.T.A.* (the initials have to be meaningless in this refined publication) to *Hardly Working* starring Jerry Lewis (who should be meaningless in any magazine).

In case you're losing interest and thinking Igo sounds less than a genre man, forget it. I should mention his films with director John Bad Carles — *The Dark*, with *Tastantant's* William Devane, and the American Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror's choice as best horror film of 1977 *Kingdom of Spiders*. (Naturally Carles directed *Mutant*, too, and the couple have more genre projects in their bag).

Igo was quickly sold in the boys' script. He took it to Edward L. Montoro, head honcho of Film Ventures International, the backers of *Kantor Carles Dark* (which had started life as a *Tales of Hoagler* project). Montoro dug the facts, work, too, and a deal got whirling. Story confer- mists followed. News ideas. More action. More flash on the characters. And a new scripter — Peter Z. Orson, who later is put forward a director to concentrate on his main line: writing.

"I really like *Mutant*," says Orson. "Not only is it a tight, suspenseful film, it has an important message. It's gratifying to entertain people with something that is significant."

Montoro agrees. "I want to stress strongly that *Mutant* is not in the pure genre at all. We're stepping away from the space of slasher films that have flooded the market recently. This story has real people that you can identify with, that you can grow to like — or dislike."

"We wanted a quality film, not just another horror movie," adds Igo Kantor. "We've not put in a lot of gore. I believe horror films can be made without being over-the-top. We kept in writing the script. We developed believable characters and good dialogue. Relationships between the characters were added and therefore, the characters have been given dimension. If you care for them and believe in them, you will believe in the story."

Aids, naturally being a producer, Igo doesn't stop there. "We also wanted to make the film worthwhile. The subject of toxic chemical poisoning is important and timely. It's a problem that concerns everyone."

"While our purpose is to entertain," stresses Edward Montoro, "we do say that toxic waste has been loosely handled and that people are getting hurt. If the film causes just 1% of the population to think differently about toxic waste, the picture has some other reason for existing."

While the makers were congratulating themselves on the improved script and brushing up their own decision — as if none of them were in it for the money! — the rest of the team were hunting locations in Utah, North and South Carolina and Georgia. They settled on a small community outside Atlanta, a place where all projects seem to have moved on, bypassing the burg on some fast lane, since the 1940s.

Location manager, Elaine Smith, found the town — and then the sites within it. Orson had it. "We needed three different houses. They had to be substantial, old Victorian style, in a rural setting and with rooms large enough to accommodate the film crew."

And with Bud Carles directing space becomes very important. Likes his studio, does Bud. He would be used to be a hell, himself. Indeed, he used to be everything in film: Actor, Stuntman, Camera, Editor, Special effects, Production manager. Oh, he's been everywhere, man. And done it all.

Bud started aged five in the *Her Gang* comedies. He had a role alongside Henry Fonda in *The Return of Frank James* (1942). At 15, he switched to the rodeo circuit as cowboy and clown alongside Slim Pickens. Bud's a funny with animals, plus his stunting talent brought him back to Hollywood for the *Sargeant Preston* of

by TONY
CRAWLEY



the *Yukon* (no kidding!) TV series. "I ran dog sleds over cliffs and did horse falls in the snow." As for directing those 5,000 tentacles in *Kingdom of the Spiders*—hell that came mighty easy for a guy that worked with Hitchcock on *The Birds* (1963).

"We've taken the original script of *Mutant*," explains Bud, "and developed it in many ways—including making it a strong action film. We've intensified the terror by adding action where you don't expect it."

This often meant varying Elaine Sencin's gun-pointed location sites to suit. Bud's needs: Finding a house is one thing; finding one to suit one stunt which specified the need of a second-floor bedroom roof is quite another. Elaine hunted about a new one and came up with a choice of four. Good get, Elaine.

In another scene, Bud had a car crash through the double doors of a warehouse, creating all kinds of havoc inside. "Originally the sequence was scheduled to be shot with the car simply pulling up outside," laughs Carole.

For another scene shot on Main Street, he had a car tearing around a corner with a mutant clinging to the roof. The car careens up on two wheels, throwing the mutant mess through a plate glass window.

"Well," says Bud, "that's better than just having him falling to the ground, right? I call ya the action will lift the film out of the ordinary. The way we actually shot a lot of scenes in the script are now like hell for more dramatic."

As if the story isn't dramatic enough...

When we left Josh, he was looking for his missing brother, Mike, right? Well, not only Mike is long gone. The corpse they found isn't there anymore when the sheriff hopes to take a gender. All that's left are a few drops of amber fluid. The local lady doctor runs a test on this stuff and finds a chemical toxic that kills humans by devouring their red blood cells.

Next in company with the town's school teacher, Josh finds a second body—a little girl in the basement of the schoolhouse. Believe me, she is far from being the film's last victim. Many more are found (I nearly said, unearthed) and all have the same tell tale wounds. But they are NOT dead... They become a type of zombie mutants craving fresh human blood to sustain their own atrophied bodies.

The good doctor's further experiments determine the cause of the ongoing horror as being toxic chemicals permeating the earth, contaminating the residents' blood. Josh decides to investigate the nearby New Era chemical plant runs into the factory thugs and is soon faced alone with Holly, the school nurse, with a town full of mutants.

Fan-freaked? Well, of course it is. But it's not all fiction and could well be a real fact by, well, how about the day after.

Item: Contaminated water from a bathroom shower in the small township of Lee, Maine, caused a victim's "eyes to redden, his skin to crack and itch and his hair to yellow and fall out."

Item: In a New York area called Love Canal, toxic wastes from an abandoned dump found their way into the soil, backyards, ground-water, basements and the air resulting, according to Virginia's Children's Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste, "a long nightmare of boarded-up homes, miscarriages (only four normal babies born out of 22 pregnancies in a year), birth defects (58% of the Canal children were born with birth defects during a four year period), genetic damage and the highest rate of lung cancer in the state of New York."

(Top) Star of *Mutant*, Wings Hauer, attempts to hold the blinding riot town at bay as (Below) the chemical pollution unleashes an orgy of violence.

Rain: American industry alone generated about 350 million tons of hazardous wastes every year. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that over 80% of these wastes are disposed of irresponsibly. Indeed they've leached 15,000 uncontrolled dumping sites all leading to contamination of drinking water supplies and serious listed adverse incidents of damage to human health, natural habitats, fish, livestock, crops, sewer systems and soil.

Ham: One of the CDHW reports says, "Sometimes you can see black smoke rising from a stack at the local factory, or an oily substance floating on the surface of your river or creek, or black goo bubbling or seeping from the ground near your home. Many contaminated areas had a sweet odour in the air or an unmistakable chemical smell."

It was reports like these that led Chris Kraus and Mike Jones to write their script. They read the papers, looked at one another, the light bulbs lit up and they said "Sounds like a horror film!"

Well now it is - with the oddly mocked-up Wings Hauser (a writer, himself) he supplied the story of Gene Hackman's *Uncommon Valor* movie) as our hero, Josh Caine, a complete opposite of his sadist killer in *Vice Squad*. Having cut *Dynasty*, Bo Hopkins was free to become the sheriff, with Jody Medford as the schoolteacher and Jennifer Warren guesting as the doctor - and all grewed up from *Ben* and *Barst* offerings, Young Lee Montgomery as the missing Mike.

Also in the cast, as one of Jody's schoolkids, is little Cary Gullay, the kid who had that remarkable close encounter with Steve Spielberg - and later had a special edition re-run of it. Cary is getting older too. All of eleven years and seven films old now.

Paul Stewart, the man with the *Twilight Zone* tragedy hanging over his head, was in charge of the film's effects, assisted by Vernon Hyde. Dave Miller supplied the master mix of prophetic. And just to show that you can take a producer out of the music department, but not the music out of a producer, Igo Kantor had Richard Band's effective score recorded with our National Philharmonic Orchestra at London's Olympic Studios, so there Hollywood!

Since the film wrapped, Igo has formed himself a new production company called Luvellwood. Well, he has a family to keep in work. Fred Kantor was *Mutant*'s production coordinator and was also responsible for the Hollywood end of the casting, while Loren Kantor was among the four production assistants, two others of which belonged to the Edward G. Robinson family.

Bad Cando is jacking Igo's first two Luvellwood movies, both sticking close to our genre they tell me. Titles? *Deadly Encounter*, which could be a subtitle for *Mutant* - and *The Most Dangerous Man in the World*, which could be, but is not *The Rose-Redden Story*. In fact I don't yet know who this dangerous guy is, but Bud did admit that Sybil Danning will be chasing after him. (Lucky him!)

As for the boys in the realteam, they're still at MGM.

"But we have worked out a way out of the realteam now," grins Mike, who has, by the way, a Master's Degree in Film from Ohio State University. He's now in MGM's TV Business Affairs Dept., while Chris Kraus, who got his degree in Communications (perfect for a real team night!) at Washington State University, is associated at the MGM Production office.

What! Oh sure, they're still writing in harness - whenever their wives give 'em time.

Before even the day after nuclear holocaust
there is the polluted night before of *Mutant*



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THE POETRY OF EVIL

by Stephen Jones

Since making his acting debut on the London stage in 1935, Vincent Price had risen to the heights of Hollywood stardom. His first film was a romantic comedy, *Servicio de Luxe*, in 1936; but within a few years he was already appearing in the type of film that would later make him famous. In *Tower of London* (1938) he costarred opposite Boris Karloff and Basil Rathbone, and followed in the footsteps of Claude Rains when he disappeared in *The Incredible Man Returns* (1940). Throughout the 1940s, Price was cast in a wide variety of parts, but it was his starring role in *House of Wax* (1953) that elevated him to one of the screen's leading horror actors. Many similar films followed such as *The Mad Magicians*, *The House on Haunted Hill*, *The Fly* and *Return of the Fly* and by the beginning of the 1960s his name on a movie marquee just about ensured box-office success.

Price's first film of the decade was once again for showman producer/director William Castle. In *The Tingler* Price played a doctor who discovered a creature at the base of the spine that thrived on fear. Only by screaming could its victim save himself from a very unpleasant death. In one particularly tense scene, the creature was loose in a deserted movie theatre and Price entreated the audience to scream for their lives — at which appropriate moment certain cinegoers really 'tingled' when they were subjected to a minor electrical shock from a device placed under their seats! Understandably, the William Castle gimmick was quickly abandoned — doubtless to the relief of the audience.

Throughout the previous decade, American International Pictures had been churning out a long succession of strange horror and science fiction films, made for very little investment and abjectly aimed at the youth market. By 1960 the company's highly successful co-owners, Samuel Z. Arkoff and James H. Nicholson, decided they were ready to expand into more prestigious productions. They wisely signed Vincent Price to a three-picture contract and hired who would director Roger Corman for the first of these projects. Corman had been responsible for many of AIP's biggest successes — the young director had a reputation for speed and effortless com-
 com-ing.

The combination of Price and Corman was to be a historical teaming that would significantly shape the direction of both their careers.

The first of their unique collaborations was *House of Usher* (1960), retitled *The Fall of the House of Usher* in Britain. Based on the classic tale by Edgar Allan Poe, the film was scripted by rapid fire story author Richard (The Incredible Shrinking Man) Matheson. Price starred as the hyper-sensitive Rodrick Usher who was obsessed with the belief that a family curse had resulted in him burying his sister alive. It was a theme that the Corman/Poe films would return to time and time again. Arkoff and Nicholson were originally wary about releasing a horror film that didn't feature an obvious monster, but Corman's ruthless astuteness ensured that the film's meagre \$300,000 budget — large by previous AIP standards — was used to full advantage (the fiery climax was still being reviewed as stock footage years later!) Price gave a subtle performance as the doomed Rodrick, and it was a role he personally was very pleased with. "It's a great story," he said. "I loved the character. I was playing because he was the most sensitive of all Poe's heroes..." However, the supporting players were not up to the same standard, and it was left to the good-looking production values and exciting climax to turn the film into a huge box-office hit and something of a cult success.

"They didn't have a Poe series in mind to begin with," said screenwriter Matheson, "but when Usher got such a good reception financially and critically they just jumped at the idea."

But Price's second film for American International, directed by William Winfrey and once

again scripted by Matheson, was based on the writings of another respected author. *Master of the World* (1961) contained two novels by 'the father of science fiction', Jules Verne. Price was ideally cast as Robur — a brilliant, but obsessed, inventor, similar to Verne's other anti-hero, Captain Nemo. Using a gigantic flying machine 'The Albatross', Robur destroyed the armed forces of the world in an attempt to force an end to all war. "Master of the World I loved because I thought it had a marvellous reasoning philosophy," said Price. "I adored it — a man who saves evil and says 'Destroy it'... and it's the whole world, then it's got to go."

Matheson's screenplay included all the right elements for a fantasy to rival Disney's classic Verne adaptation, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954), but it was marred by AIP's penny-pinching approach. The juvenile adventure used a great deal of stock footage from other films (much of it monochrome tinted in colour) with the ludicrous result that in one scene the 19th century flying fortress is shown apparently bombing Elizabethan London! Price gave a colourful performance as the half-mad Robur, and he was ably supported by Charles Bronson and Henry (Warwick of London) Hall as his adversaries.

Next, Price was reunited with Roger Corman for their second AIP/Poe collaboration *Fit and the Fendulover* (1961) was loosely adapted by Matheson, who infused the tortoise device for the film's exciting climax. Price portrayed Nicholas Madine, a 16th century Spanish lord haunted by his father's evil reputation and slowly being driven mad by his unfaithful wife. Corman, never a strong believer in action allowed Price to go unheeded over the top, deciding gleefully as he tortured his victims, and it was left to horror queen Barbara Steele to stand out from the typically weak supporting cast. Once again the film overcame its minuscule budget, mostly due to the expertise of the crew Corman was gathering around him. Floyd Crosby's fluid camerawork, Sam Hall's imaginative set designs and Les Baxter's vibrant music score were an integral contribution to all the early Poe films.

Then Price was off to Italy to appear in a trio of little-known films. He played a high priest of Ancient Egypt in *Nelantide Regina Dei Mito* (1961), *Queen of the Nile*, a white-slaver pitted against Riccardo Montalban's swash-buckling hero. In *Gordin, il Pivato Nero* (1961), *The Black Buccaneer* or also known as *The Rage of the Buccaneer* and the role character in *L'ultimo Uomo Della Terra* (not released until 1964 as *The Last Man on Earth*). This last film was based on Richard Matheson's acclaimed science fiction novel *I Am Legend* and starred Price as the last human survivor in a world populated by vampire-like creatures.

Director Sydney Selkowitz did the best he could with a pitifully low budget, but Matheson was very critical of the result. "I thought it was terrible," he said. "At first I wrote the screenplay for Hammer Films, but they told me that the English censor wouldn't pass it. They had someone rewrite it and made it abysmal. Price, whom I like as an actor, was completely wrong for the part." A later version, titled *The Omega Man* (1971), starred Charlton Heston in the Price role, had a much larger budget, and was even less faithful to the source novel!



Vincent Price, Peter Lorne and Basil Rathbone — stars of horror stars from AIP's *Tales of Terror* (top). (Below) From *The Black Buccaneer* of that film, Lorne extracts a dreadful price from the enemy Vincent.

Pace narrated *Naked Terror* (1961), a quick documentary about barbaric Zulu customs before starring in *Confessions of an Opium Eater* (1962), judiciously retitled *Evils of Chinatown* in Britain. He also turned up in an art-loving author in the peach drama *Convents 4* (1962), titled *Reprieve* in Britain before returning to horror once again.

Tower of London (1962) was hardly a remake of the 1938 movie that introduced Pace to horror film. Directed by Roger Corman and produced by his brother Gene for Admiral Pictures, this Shakespearean historical horror once again had Pace overplaying his role – as Richard of Gloucester, surrounded by the ghosts of past victims and some nasty torture devices.

The next Pace/Corman film was much better. Richard Matheson's script for American International's *Tales of Terror* (1962) featured the actor in three separate episodes based on stories by Poe. *Morilla*, in which Pace kept his mummified wife in their bed, was the weakest of the trio, although it contained elements of his later film *The Tomb of Ligeia*.

The second segment was a great improvement – it combined *The Black Cat* and *The Cask of Amontillado* in black comedy in which Pace fell in love with Peter Lorre's much put-upon wife (Joyce Jameson). Unfortunately the infidelity was discovered and the lovers were wellied up by the infuriated spouse. The acting honours in the first episode, *The Case of Mr. Valdemar*, went to Basil Rathbone as a scheming mesmerist who kept Pace's head alive after death to force his victim's wife into marriage. The climax had Pace, his features disintegrating into dozing slime, claiming just revenge on his tormentor. Once again, the production values were excellent for such a low budget film and the movie benefited from the presence of three of the screen's best horror stars.

The unexpected success of the flamboyant middle section of *Tales of Terror* prompted AIP to follow it up with *The Raven* in 1963. Suggested by one of Poe's most famous poems, Matheson created a totally original story line ("I wasn't much to work with," he said, "anyways, I couldn't have done another serious one.") The film co-starred Pace with Boris Karloff returning to the screen after four years' absence) as evil medieval sorcerer, and Peter Lorre played another magician, transformed into the raven of the title. Director Roger Corman, more interested in the technical difficulties, allowed his stars to embellish every opportunity, but managed to conclude the film with an impressive dual of magic utilizing excellent special effects. The supporting cast included Hazel Court as the 'Lover' Lenore and a young Jack Nicholson as the bumbling hero.

Pace narrated *Chagall* (1963), an Oscar-winning documentary about the artist, before appearing in *Twice Told Tales* (1963), another anthology film, this time based on three tales by Nathaniel Hawthorne. An obvious attempt by Admiral Pictures to repeat the success of AIP's Edgar Allan Poe series, director Sidney Sellow lacked Corman's style. *Dr. Heidegger's Experiment* featured Pace as the discoverer of an elixir of 'eternal' youth. In the classic *Rappaccini's Daughter* he was the father of a girl who destroyed all she touched. The final episode was a truncated version of *The House of the Seven*



Pace meets his "lost Lenore" in the Corman classic *The Raven* whilst a young Jack Nicholson looks on (top). As a teenager obsessed with homocidal urges, Pace gave a compelling performance in *Diary of a Madman* (below).

Gables, which Price had originally appeared in back in 1940 – this time, however, he was cast as the villain.

Price's next film was also based on a well-known supernatural tale. *The Wicker Man*, by French writer Guy de Maupassant. Reginald Le Borg directed *Curse of a Madman* (1968), in which Price gave a good performance as a magistrate, possessed by a being from another dimension that feeds on evil.

Matheson and American International took time off from kidnapping Price to make *The Conquest of Tennesse* in 1963. Veteran director Jacques Tourneur led his best but the result was disappointing and only the fine cast made it watchable. "AP used the old stars because they could get them cheaply," revealed Matheson. "It was a good script but it didn't translate all that well on to the screen. But with a two-week shooting schedule, you can't spend too much time on anything. That's all the time AP ever spent on any of those pictures. That's how they made their money." Vincent Price and Peter Lorne played two unsuccessful undertakers who were reduced to creating new business by murdering their clients. However it was left to Boris Karloff, Sam Robison and co-producer Joe E. Brown in cameo appearances to keep the humour bubbling. Sadly, the film marked Peter Lorne's last genre appearance (he went on to make a Jerry Lewis comedy) and an obvious double was used in several sequences.

Price played with comedy to make a guest appearance as Big Daddy in AP's *Beach Party* (1963) the last of their 'lean and surf' series featuring Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello.

Although credited to another poem by Edgar Allan Poe, American International's *The Hallowed Palace* (1963) was in fact a fairly faithful adaptation of H. P. Lovecraft's short novel *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*. Price gave an unusually low key performance as Ward, who returned to his ancestral mansion in the New England village of Arkham and was gradually possessed by the vengeful spirit of his evil forbear, a warlock named Joseph Curwen, also played by Price. Producer/director Roger Corman and inspired production values around the film looked good (except for a brief shot of a very unconvincing Elder Galt), and Price was ably supported by such stalwarts as Lon Chaney Jr., Elia Cask Jr. and John Duerkes.

For the next Poe adaptation AP decided to film in Britain. *The Manse of the Red Death* (1964) was scripted by Charles Beaumont and R. Wright Carrisball and combined the title story with another Poe tale. Hop Toed Price gave an outstanding performance as the Devil-worshipping Prospero, an enigmatic 12th century Italian prince attempting to hold his castle and its cavaliers against the onslaught of the red death, causing the country outside. Price allowed his character some fine touches of sardonic humour, Nicholas Raag's colour photography was stunning and Roger Corman's direction was filled with poetic imagery. Against the British supporting cast, Hazel Court, Nigel Green and particularly Patrick Magee stood out.

Price's next film, based on Poe's famous legend, brought the actor back to Britain. Robert (Chiswick) Towne's literate script marked the last of the Corman/Price collaborations, and *The Tomb of Ligeia* (1964) featured Price in a wonderfully underplayed performance as the bizarre Vanden Fell, possessed by the will of his dead wife. The film's remarkable blend of the supernatural, hypnosis, Egyptian magic and hints of necrophilia made this one of the best, and most underrated, movies of Price's career. The prowling photography atmospherically captured the 900-year-old Norfolk Abbey location, and Elisabeth Shophard was very effective in the dual role of Fell's two wives: the vivacious Rowena and the dead Ligeia.

Once again based in Britain, AP's *The City*



Under the Sea (1965), titled *Wargods of the Deep* in America) was directed by Jacques Tourneur. Unfairly dismissed as a juvenile fantasy/adventure, this entertaining film was based on one line from a poem by Poe. Price played the Captain, the leader of a group of Cornish smugglers trapped for 100 years beneath the sea in the lost city of Llyonesse. Unfortunately, the film also included David Tomlinson, but not Alakim and some very unconvincing Gillman.

Price returned to Hollywood to narrate the documentary *I Tabu* (1965, U.S.A. *Tabooes of the World*), and then went on to play the devilical scientist of the title of Norman Taurog's science fiction spoof *Dr Goldfoot and the Bikini Machine* (1965). This hot and mess comedy parodied AP's beach party/horror series as Price created an army of beautiful, but deadly robots. When given an extremely limited release in Britain, the title was changed to *Dr. G. and the Bikini Machine* when a real Dr Goldfoot threatened to sue!

AP quickly followed up with an inferior sequel, *Dr. Goldfoot and the Girl Bombs* (1966) in which Price's good looking robots explode in contact. Filmed in Italy and featuring a dice comedy team named Franco and Ciccio it was directed by Mario Bionni on one of his off days.

Price returned to America to make *The Jockels* (1967) and then moved to Madrid to play a white slave in a German/Spanish co-production, *Das Haus Der Tausend Freud* (1967, *House of 1000 Doors*). Price recalled that "One day after filming I walked back to the set to see what was going on. They were re-filming exactly the same sequence and I shot earlier, only the ladies in it were stark, bare-assed naked! They weren't even the same women. I guess you couldn't get a Spanish girl to take off her gloves let alone her clothes."

The following year Price returned to Britain to give one of his finest ever performances. *Witchfinder General* (1968) was in fact based on a novel by Ronald Bassett, yet in America it was released as Edgar Allan Poe's *The Conqueror Worm* to give the false impression that it was a continuation of the AP series. In a powerful performance, Price played Matthew Hopkins, an opportunist lawyer from Norwich who toured Cromwell's England torturing and burning alleged witches. Criticised for its violence it was superbly directed by Michael Reeves – his third and tragically, his last film as he died of an over dose of barbiturates a year later aged only twenty-five. Beautifully photographed in muted tones amidst authentic East Anglian locations the film featured strong supporting performances and proved that, when not parodying his own image and given the right motivation, Price is an extremely talented actor.

A couple of forgettable appearances followed, in a Clint Walker western *Mosses Dead Then Alive* (1968) and a cameo (along with John Carls) in the Elvis Presley musical *The Chastelaine* (1969, in Britain retitled *The Trouble With Girls* – *And How To Get Into It*, before the actor returned to Edgar Allan Poe once again).

Anastasia (1968), from Warner Brothers, was a ten-minute short directed by Ron Morano which cleverly utilised re-touched still photographs. Price's distinctive voice narrated Poe's

Price and Jane Acker meet an unwelcome guest (top) in *The Manse of the Red Death* (below) No, not *Curse of the Faceless Gods* but a dramatic moment from *The Hallowed Palace*

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HISTORY OF HAMMER

Part 9

By BOB SHERIDAN

The last Hammer film of 1968, *The Lost Continent* marked the end of Hammer's USA distribution arrangement with 20th Century Fox, which had begun with *The Mummy* in 1959. Warner Brothers-Fox replaced Fox as US distributors of Hammer features released in Britain by Warner-Pathe. *The Lost Continent* was Hammer's second filming of a Dennis Wheatley novel, quickly following the release of *The Devil Rides Out*. This time, however, the film was not based on one of Wheatley's Black Magic novels, instead it was derived from a fantastic adventure novel called *Uncharted Seas*. Scripted by Michael Nash, *The Lost Continent* was produced and directed by Michael Carreras.

Unfortunately, *The Lost Continent* failed to capture the feel of Wheatley's work. While *The Devil Rides Out* offered a tightly knit narrative, *The Lost Continent* meandered. Particularly in its first half, the film seemed like a soap-opera version of *Ship Of Fools*. Worse: there isn't even a "lost continent" in the film, except perhaps in a symbolic sense. Actually, the title comes from a 1951 Lippert film of the same name which Eclair-Picco Pictures had distributed in Britain (see H&E 16).

The Hammer film is occasionally mistaken for a remake of the earlier Lippert production. Inevitably of a genuine lead mass, the "lost world" of Wheatley's is a Sargasso Sea—an area where sailing ships for centuries. Survivors of a Spanish fleet encountered their descendants, with their descendants still observing the customs of their ancestors in the twentieth century. In the case, that means that the Spanish Inquisition lives: at least on a small scale. The area is also inhabited by vicious strange (and unpleasant) creatures.

Filmed on a higher budget than usual for Hammer, *The Lost Continent* is most memorable for its impressive sets, particularly the weed-overgrown ancient ship. The monomers are less successful, as their mechanical nature is readily apparent. Still, the film does offer its fair share of action and horror, along with the bizarre plot elements for which Hammer films are just famous.

On the level of acting, *The Lost Continent* is distinguished mainly by the emotional conviction of Hildegard Knef. On the female side, the film also introduced rock singer/actress Dana Gillespie in the role of Sara, one of the inhabitants of this seaworld that we forget.

A startling pre-credits deception sequence sets the tone for *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed*, Hammer's first release of 1969. By far the greatest of Hammer's Frankenstein entries, the film once again teamed star Peter Cushing with director Terence Fisher. The script, which Fisher claimed to have a hand in, was credited to Bert Ball, assistant director on the film as well as a number of other Hammer productions. The film's basic story was devised by Ball and Anthony Nelson-Key.

Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed finds the Baron, under the name Fenner, hiding from the police at a boarding house run by pretty, young Anne Spengler (Veronica Carlson). Her fiancé, Karl (Brend Ward), is an intern at a nearby madhouse. In order to pay hospital bills for Anne's ill mother, Karl has been stealing and selling drugs, juggling the books at work to cover the supply shortages. When "Fenner" learns of this, he threatens to lose identity to Karl and Anne, and blackmails them into sending him. It seems that an old colleague of Frankenstein's, Dr. Brandt, is an inmate at the hospital at which Karl works. Frankenstein kidnaps Brandt, intending to cure his insanity by an operation. However,

From *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* with Peter Cushing (top) as Baron "Fenner", Veronica Carlson in last performance (center) as Anne Spengler and (below) Freddie Jones' syphilis-ridden monster.





Brandt is mortally injured during the escape, and so Frankenstein transfers Brandt's brain into the body of Professor Richter, a doctor at this hospital. When Brandt/Richter awakens after the lengthy-coming operation, he is driven mad again by the realization that, as he puts it, "I have become the victim of everything Frankenstein and I ever advocated." Rejected by even his (Brandt's) own wife (Moore Audley), he sets a fiery trap for Frankenstein and, by the film's conclusion, all of the major characters are dead or dying.

Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed is an extremely intense film, with consistently strong acting eliciting constant audience involvement. Freddie Jones, as the film's "monster," is heart-wrenchingly pathetic in his agonizing elation (director Fisher has mentioned that the film was to have included more footage of the encounters between Jones and Audley, but this and other material was eliminated to get the film down to its 90 minutes running time). Veronica Cartwright, who was elegantly put-upon in her first Hammer film, *Dracula Has Risen From The Grave* (see *MoH 28*), gave probably the finest performance of her career in **Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed**. Portraying an innocent driven to madness by the horrors she must endure, she managed to breathe such life into Anna that the character could draw empathy from the coldest of viewers. Simon Ward, like *Dr. Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell* (see *MoH 25*), was guided by Terence Fisher through a performance which proved that his talent went far beyond the requirements of the usual "juvenile" leading role in films of this type. Soon after his appearance in **Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed**, Ward was given the title role in the prestigious *Young Winston*.

Despite this "competition," Peter Cushing's is still the finest performance in **Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed**. Born Frankenstein, whose character had been softened in the previous two series entries, is more feral and conscienceless than ever this time. Lacking any genuinely monstrous "Frankenstein 'monster,'" the film offers Frankenstein himself as its true fiend. But Cushing's (and Fisher's) Frankenstein is still not merely a one-dimensional "mad scientist," by his own rules, he is a dedicated idealist. His ultimate goal in the film is the preservation of great minds. He is seeking a method (which Brandt discovered before going mad) of keeping the human brain alive permanently. While his treatment of other characters in the film is shocking, Frankenstein is a firm believer in the notion that the end justifies any means. Cushing, who has always shown a fondness for the role, brings every ounce out of Frankenstein's complex character. Never before had Cushing achieved the depth of character to be found in **Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed**.

After filming **Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed**, Terence Fisher suffered a second leg injury (see *MoH 28*). This, coupled with the director's increasing inactivity throughout the 1960's, led to speculation that the Hammer Frankenstein series, as filmmakers had come to know it, was over. Further evidence to support this notion was forthcoming shortly.

Hammer's next release, *Moon Zero Two*, was a high-budget science-fiction adventure directed by Roy Ward Baker, from a Michael Cresswell script which in turn was based on a story by Gavin Lyall, Frank Hardman, and Martin Gostke. Instead of being straight science-fiction, *Moon Zero Two* is a rather tongue-in-cheek "space-western." The film's locations include a futuristic airport bar, which is strongly reminiscent of the standard western film saloon (some eight

years later, an outer space saloon would be the setting for one of the most famous sequences in George Lucas' *Star Wars*). As its main plot element, *Moon Zero Two* offers the premise of "dram jumping" in outer space. Naturally, this leads to thrilling shootouts and chases involving a vengeful hero (James Olson) and his ally/obstacle against extremely nasty villains. The western motif is even carried over into the film's dialogue, which includes a number of amusing reworkings of stock western lines. Even on the level of music, *Moon Zero Two* is decidedly offbeat, featuring a score by jazzman Son Eke and a title song performed by jazz-rock singer Julie Driscoll.

Despite some excellent special effects and an able cast (which included Adrienne Cori, Bernard Brelaw and Michael Roper), *Moon Zero Two* was a boxoffice failure. Coming in the wake of thought provoking productions such as *Planet Of The Apes* and 2001 *A Space Odyssey*, *Moon Zero Two* is comparatively lightweight entertainment, lacking the "significance" of its contemporaries. Another explanation is suggested by the fact that *Moon Zero Two* was released the same year that the first manned landing occurred — perhaps the people were unwilling to go and see this sort of fiction when they could stay home and see the real thing on television.

More traditional Hammer territory was involved in *Taste The Blood Of Dracula*, which marked Christopher Lee's fourth starring appearance in the series and Hammer's first release in 1960. Anthony Hinds, once again under the name John Elder, wrote the screenplay. Lee and Hinds' longtime Hammer veterans, were offset by two newcomers to the Hammer "family," both fresh from British television. The reformed Dracula, in the familiar person of Lee, is held off until mid-film. Up until the entrance of Dracula, the film's central evil character is the decadent young Lord Courtney, played in his feature film debut by Ralph Bates. And Hinds' script was filmed by Hungarian-born director Peter Szabó who, like Bates, had never worked in theatrical films before this one.

The film's plot is constructed around the sort of revenge/retribution theme which Hinds seemingly favored during this period in Hammer's history. As usual, it is the details and variations that matter, and this time they are particularly nifty. The hypocritical perversion of Dracula's works is matched — and surpassed — by the perverse irony of their fates. The women, a trio of well-respected members of polite British society, are shown to be shockingly strict and cruel in their treatment of their teenage children. Meanwhile, the three gather by night to seek little thrills in the seamy section of London's East End. Their increasing disaffection leads them to a chance meeting with Lord Courtney who persuades them to purchase the remains and artifacts of Count Dracula — some red powder, a ring, and a cape. These are in the possession of a salesman (Roy Kinnear) who had witnessed Dracula's demise on a golden cross (in some nice editing employing footage from *Dracula Has Risen From The Grave*) and collected them in a daze. In a disaffected church, they begin an unholy ritual to revive the vampire king. Courtney cuts himself and mixes his blood with the red powder. When the others refuse to drink his vile brew, Courtney himself does and promptly dies, wearing Dracula's cloak and ring. After the others flee in fear, Courtney's corpse transforms into Count Dracula — alive, or at least actively undead. Enraged by the death of such a dedicated disciple as Courtney, Dracula vows to destroy the young Lord's accomplices. This he does by welcoming their children and then willing them to kill their fathers in varied but consistently grisly ways. It is a credit to director Szabó that these depraved characters become nearly sympathetic figures before their respective dooms overtake them. Dracula himself is

James Olson hops goats through lunar customs in *Moon Zero Two* with Warren Mitchell (center) as a wealthy magnate. (Below) Cuthbert as a contemporary milk campaign by Hammer.



destroyed when the church, which he is using as his base of operations, is reconsecrated.

Taste The Blood Of Dracula showed off the classic Hammer advantages to a greater extent than usual. The scenery, sets, and costumes are all well integrated and shot to great atmospheric effect. James Bernard's score, which he has named as his personal favourite, is indeed particularly first, from the moody and sensitive opening themes to the anticlimactic renditions of the major theme, which Bernard originally composed for Hammer's first *Dracula* (see part two in *Howl 18*). However, **Taste The Blood Of Dracula** did have one flaw that particularly irritated Christopher Lee — his dialogue was consistently awful, to the extent that Lee personally annotated much of it, refusing to do the film otherwise. Further, Lee publicly announced that he would not portray Dracula in any more Hammer series entries. However, his performance in **Taste The Blood Of Dracula** still contains moments of the old magic, implying that Lee was unable to resist the lure of the character.

Next came **Crescendo**, directed by Alan Gibson. Jimmy Sangster and Alfred Hitchcock have adapted the film's script from an original screenplay by Sheughnessy. Starring Stephanie Powers and James Olson, the film was a vain attempt at repeating the success of Hammer's earlier psychological thrillers. This meandering tale of a crippled composer (Olson) haunted by mystifying nightmares unfortunately offers nothing new or distinctive, and any Hammer fan worthy of the name could deduce the film's 'surprise' ending within the first half hour of its 95 minute running time.

Hammer's most popular characters, Frankenstein and Dracula, returned faster than ever before courtesy of a double-bill released in Britain by MGM-MCA and in America by Continental Pictures. Fans of Hammer's Frankenstein series were disappointed to learn that neither Peter Cushing nor Terence Fisher were involved in the making of **Honor of Frankenstein**. Hopes were raised by the information that Jimmy Sangster, writer of the first two films in the series, served as writer (with Jeremy Bushman) producer, and director of the new film. The film's casting seemed to indicate that **Honor of Frankenstein** was designed to showcase the new crop of actors at Hammer. Ralph Bates replaced Peter Cushing as Baron Frankenstein, supported by Veronica Carlson, Kate O'Mara, John Foch, and David Vicker. Thomas as the monster.

Instead of continuing the Frankenstein series which Hammer had been unfolding for well over a decade, Sangster chose to take his youngest cast through a remake of the first film in the series, **The Curse Of Frankenstein** (see part two in *Howl 18*). This time, though, Sangster was without the balancing effect provided by Fisher and Cushing the first time out. Thus, the film went totally overboard in its satirical humour and unpleasant tone. Frankenstein is depicted as an overgrown spoiled brat, with every other character appearing to be either pompous, grumpy, or, in most cases, merely stupid. The only moments of any warmth come out of the relationship between a gawwabbit (Dennis Price, doing Hammer horror for the first time) and his wife (Joan Rice). As for the monster, he has no personality whatsoever and functions as a plot device rather than a character. In conclusion, suffice to say that **Honor Of Frankenstein**, unlike **The Curse Of Frankenstein**, never spawned a sequel, much less a series.

Christopher Lee as Dracula in **Taste The Blood of Dracula** — the old magic still there even though Lee was now getting fed up with Hammer's interpretation.

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CAMPBELL'S COLUMN

There are depths of darkness in any human mind to which the logic of storytelling might point the way, but which are far better left alone."

So says Michael Stamm, reviewing Stephen King's *Pet Sematary* in *Pentony Newsletter*. That sounds to me like a recipe for blandness and reiteration, the kind of horror fiction that dotes out polite shivers but would shrink from the possibility of being too disturbing. It isn't my kind, as I hope my fiction shows. The best horror fiction is a report from the edge of experience, and the only security it need offer is the reader's knowledge that it's fiction: the kind of horror Clive Barker, of whom more later, writes. Nevertheless I tend to agree with Stamm that *Pet Sematary* ultimately fails, however honorably, and I should like to offer a few thoughts on and around the reasons why.

First, however a warning: in order to discuss *Pet Sematary* I shall have to give away the ending. If you haven't read the novel, please skip the rest of this article and pick it up at the last paragraph, unless you want to ruin both the effect King wanted to achieve and your own pleasure. (And if you do, you may find that my little friend who scribbles up people's backs and under people's heads when he finds them looking at the last pages of books is behind you.)

Pentony Newsletter ran a parallel review of *Pet Sematary* (as Stephen King's best novel) alongside Stamm's. Is it Michael A. Morrison writes, "From an ostensibly simplistic point of view, one could describe *Pet Sematary* as King's 'torture novel.'" This trouble is that by the end of the book it's possible to feel that the description is rather too appropriate. *Pet Sematary* is King's finest horror novel until the last thirty pages, which belong to a different book.

The plot is the simplest of any King novel. A ceremony on the site of an old Indian burying ground has the power to resurrect the dead. The protagonist, a father, loses his youngest child in a road accident, and succumbs to the temptation to engineer the child's resurrection. (As a matter of fact I don't think I'm giving away any secrets so far. I imagine King wants us to know and dread, what's coming.) A disarming theme, yet the real source of the book's power is in scenes that don't involve the supernatural: the wife's harrowing monologue about her crippled sister's death and the guilt she herself suffered, the new conflict between Leland and wife that guilt causes, in scenes far more disturbing than the mental conflicts in King's novel *The Shining*, above all, the nightmarishly horrific (and really being the greatest nightmare) scenes of the child's death and his funeral, which King introduces by contradicting Lovecraft: thus "It's probably wrong to believe there can be any limit to the terror which the human mind can experience" — a line which can be read as announcing the unbroken of the book. King has rarely dug deeper into himself for his material than ever before, and it's perhaps a measure of the artistic courage involved that at the last his nerve fails him.

It's also a measure of the difficulty of the theme he is addressing: the child as victim and/or monster. Robin Wood and Tony Williams have analyzed at length the numerous horror films in which the monster is the product of a family. *Psycho* being the prototype for the "invented" but as far as I know, nobody has analyzed the possibility that some of these films may appear to a hatred of children. I suspect Max von Sydow, who played the assistant in *The Exorcist*, was right to fear that audiences were being invited to enjoy the sufferings of possessed Linda Blair (especially since everything she does in her possessed state can be responded to as a caricature of adolescent rebellion, which the film attributes to the influence of the devil). In case I seem to be exaggerating, consider this:

"I think we — that is, in Western society — feel that children are doing little evils who do

nothing wrong, and we have to be nice to them as much as what they do. We like to think that underneath any bad behaviour is a heart of gold, which actually we know that underneath that vicious behaviour is a black heart, a little demon. People can cope with their children all day long, put them to bed, kiss them goodnight, and then pick up one of my books and read about how these kids really are!"

This loathsome and disgusting nonsense comes from a writer whom I refuse to publish further: interviewed in *Twilight Zone* magazine (presumably on the basis of being but cleverest himself out of his own mouth). At least it is valuable in making explicit an attitude I suspect to be more widespread than is generally recognized — disturbing, surely, that it should go unnoticed while the tendency of some recent horror films to serve up women as victims was so widely deplored. There are far more books and films about children as monsters than children as perils. King has written several exceptions, of course, and there's *Clew*, the first published work of Norfolk horror novelist Jay Ramsey, a book about the vulnerability of children which, besides including a scene of cannibalism that makes the basest violence pale, raises the point that not only might it be difficult to distinguish the effects of a child's angry evil on parents from the kind of parental behaviour our society seems to find acceptable, but that even those who notice mightn't intervene. (At least in *The Shining* one can reassure oneself that all this wouldn't happen if there were other people around.) The irony is that it's King's love of children and his dislike of fiction that treats them as evil which inspires *Pet Sematary* when he has to present a child as a monster. It comes across as less deadly felt than the rest of the book. Bluntly the comic plot of the last thirty pages — however artistically handling the notion may be of a white innocent child possessed by an obscene homicidal spirit — belongs in a George Romero novel, not in this novel.

I thought there could have been a finale I would have found far more terrifying: that the child returns, unquestionably dead but not possessed, and the family have to adjust to this. Would that be far better left alone? I might well be a theme most horror writers would flinch from.

Clive Barker might not, in case you thought I'd forgotten about him. (ALL RIGHT I'VE STOPPED GIVING AWAY THE PLOT OF *PET SEMATARY* YOU CAN COME BACK NOW.) Barker is the author of the *Books of Blood*, just published in three volumes by Sphere Books and soon to be published in America by Berkley. I wrote the introduction to them (and I don't want to repeat myself) but if any contemporary writer can lead the genre into new territory, he can — indeed already has. Stephen King has characterized the horror genre as essentially reactionary andervative, so far as I'm concerned as a writer, he's wrong, and Barker clearly disagrees too. Barker is a writer who's prepared to go all the way, wherever the logic of his imagination may lead him. He seems to me to be the first true voice of the next generation of horror writers and I greet the news of his first novel *The Damnation Game* with cheers and eagerness. I'm proud to have introduced him. The genre needs him.

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OCT 19th!**

VAN HELSING'S TERROR TALES



SLEEP IS THE GATEWAY TO MANY FANTASIES... FANTASIES THAT APPEAR MOST REAL TO THE DREAMER. ANTON BELASCO WAS A DREAMER, HIS DREAMS OF EVIL AN ESCAPE FROM THE HUMDRUM REALITIES OF LIFE, UNTIL HE DISCOVERED THAT...

THE NIGHT HOLDS TERROR

DURING THE EARLY 17th CENTURY MATTHEW HOPKINS WAS THE MOST RUTHLESS OF WITCH-FINDERS...

BIND THIS DAUGHTER OF SATAN... SO THAT SHE MAY BE CLEANSED OF HER EVIL!



...HIS METHODS THE MOST CRUEL AND INHUMAN!

AIEE

EEE!



THE VILLAGERS ARE ECSTATIC...

THE WITCHFINDER IS APPALLED



...AND TO BE BELASCO!

THE MID-NIGHT FANES BELASCO WAKING UP TO THE COLD, PLAGUE-RELENTING OF CONSCIOUSNESS...

IF ONLY I HAD REALLY LIVED IN MATTHEW HOPKINS' DAY...



HIS MIND RECALLS THE DREAM WITH BELIEF

BUT TONIGHT I WILL DREAM OF EVEN GREATER THINGS... HAVE TO WAIT FOR... TONIGHT!



SCRIPT: TISE VAMMAGI

ART: BRIAN LEWIS

AND SO, EVENTUALLY, NIGHT FALLS
AND WITH IT COMES A NEW DREAM
FOR BELASCO...

LET THIS
SERVE AS A
WARNING TO
ALL WHO DO NOT
FEAR THE GREAT
VLAD!

AAAYEEEE!

FOR VLAD THE
IMPALER, HUMAN
LIFE WAS BUT A MEERE
TOY...

IT WAS NOT WITHOUT REASON
THE VLAD EARNED HIS
NAME... THE IMPALER!

TO END ALL
ENEMIES OF
VLAD THE
IMPALER

AND WHEN BELASCO WOKED
FROM THE TRAUMATIC
EXPERIENCE... WHICH DREAM
ALMOST REAL?

...ALMOST FOR REAL!

COULD IT BE? HAD A
FRAGMENT OF
BELASCO'S DREAM
FOLLOWED HIM TO THE DELIGHT HOUSES
OF REALITY?

WHAAAT?
MY HANDS
— THEY'RE
COVERED...
IN BLOOD!

NO! NO! I
CAN'T BE...
WOULDN'T LET IT!
IT'S ONLY A
DREAM!

ONCE ASLEEP, BELASCO HAD NO CONTROL OVER HIS DREAMS... AND SO WHEN NIGHT CAME...



GO ON...
COSH 'ER!
COSH 'ER!

THE MUSTY STREETS OF LIFE IN A CENTURY EDINBURGH WERE A BREEDING GROUND FOR ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS OF NEAPOLIS TRADERS... BODY SNATCHING!



BEH!
BOOM!
OLD 'ER
STEADY...

THE PARTNERSHIP OF BURKE AND HARE WERE ABOUT TO CLAIM ANOTHER VICTIM...



IMON, HARE,
LEAVE UP!
COSH 'ER
...THERE SHE
WAKES THE
WHOLE CITY!

HAIEEEEE!!



THE SHINY GOODS ARE DELIVERED...

GOOD, GOOD... BUT I HOPE SHE'S A FRESH ONE...



FRESH ALRIGHT, GUY!
SHE'S STILL
WARM!

AND WHEN A NEARLY ASLEEP AWAKENED...



WHA...
WHERE...
WHERE AM
I...?

...HIS MIND ON THE VERGE OF SNAPPING!



NO! IT
CAN'T BE
...IT WASN'T
REAL! NOT
REAL!

BELASCO TRIES TO ESCAPE VIA EXCESS ALCOHOL...



NO... MORE...
DREAMS! NOW
...TOO DRUNK
...TO... DREAM...

DEEP IN A DRUNKEN SLUMBER, BELASCO IS NOW EVEN MORE VULNERABLE TO WHATEVER HORRORS THE NIGHT HAD IN STORE FOR HIM...





A GIGANTIC FIGURE MADE
ITS WAY THROUGH
THE POGGY AVENUES
OF 1888 LONDON...



AFTER 1888
IT'S JACK THE
RIPPER!

BELASCO WAS
AWAKENED BY A
SOUND AT THE
DOOR...



A UNBELIEVABLE
SIGHT MET HIS EYES
WHEN HE OPENED THE
DOOR...



AND BACK IN
A BELASCO'S
REAL MODERN
DAY WORLD...





HoH7 45p
Twins of Evil strip,
The Green Karloff,
The Werewolf, Female
Vampires, Devil's Men,
Wonder Woman, etc.



HoH8 45p
Quatermass strip,
King Kong, Jekyll
& Hyde, Hammer
Science Fiction
Hms, Lea's NEW
Dracula, etc.



HoH9 45p
Quatermass Pt 2,
Carnie, Kong
(1931), Seizure,
Scum, De Palma,
Living Dead
At Manchester



HoH10 45p
Dance of the Werewolf
strip, Close
Encounters, Seasonal,
Fu Manchu,
Son of Kong,
Shadowman



HoH11 45p
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Harryhausen
speaks, Cushing AS
Dracula, Words
Scribbled, Zoltan,
Burnt Offerings



HoH12 45p
Gargen strip Part 2,
Hercules, Blood City,
Witchfinder General,
1933 Invisible
Men, Face of
Frankenstein, etc.



HoH13 45p
Rage of Zombies
strip, Star Wars
Unearthing, Paris
Festival, People
That Time Forgot,
Godzilla, Zeebees



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Millon Years BC
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Raiders on
Martin + review,
Dinosaur films,
Paris Festival Film



HoH15 45p
Mummy's Shroud
strip, Dr. Moreau,
Sunderly Rose, Blue
Sundown, Fantastic,
Mummy's feature,
Frankenstein etc.



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storyboards,
Hornedogs, Cerebras
interview,
New Shander strip



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Henryhausen storyboards,
Cathy's
Cuse Child, Far
grounds of Horror



HoH18 45p
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and Weiswolf
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History of
Hammer's Raiders,
Deep Red



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filmography,
History of Hammer
II, Peeping Men and
Directors + Monster
Beds



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Melting
Men and Savage
Sensations, Vampire
Hunters feature,
Hammer II



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Shander strip,
Wrightson, Bolton,
Lewellen, Worlds
of Dead



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Scorcher's Black
Sundry Roger
Dicken FX, Hammer
mummy film



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Last Wave, Argento
interview, 3-D film,
Rosemary's Baby
The Shout



HoH24 50p
Special all comic
strip issue, Seven
Golden Vampires,
Quatermass Experiment
Feature



HoH25 75p
Monster Club Pt 1
Belphegor 99% + 29g
colour poster, Steh
Movie, Hammer
Video horror, ideas
to gore, Black on
Psycho 2



HoH26 75p
Monster Club Pt 2,
Belphegor Speaks: Lee
Cushing by FJA,
Lorne Lugosi, Pleasure,
Karlott, Cannadine,
Crisis + cartoon



HoH27 75p
Brides of Dracula
strip, horror video
listing, Argento,
Kushik, Jews 3-D,
History of Hammer
& Media Movie



HoH28 50p
Jeff Hawke strip,
The Making of Star
Wars, Harry Harrison,
Star Trek Winem,
Trek space
genre, Things to
Come



HoH29 50p
C3PO Interview,
Spider-Man Movie,
Ray Bradbury on
Close Encounters
Wards, The Prisoner,
Space Cruise,
Jeff Hawke



HoH30 50p
Ham Solo interview,
Quark, Star Trek
the movie, Superman,
Leger's non
Close Encounters
Superman poster,
SF Film

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HALLS OF

PLAGUE OF THE
ZOMBIES

Doug Trumbull on
SPECIAL EFFECTS

THE REPTILE

